ROME, THE GREEK WORLD, AND THE EAST

VOLUME 3

THE GREEK WORLD, THE JEWS, & THE EAST

FERGUS MILLAR

EDITED BY HANNAH M. COTTON & GUY M. ROGERS

Rome, the Greek World,
and the East

Studies in the History of Greece and Rome

Robin Osborne, P. J. Rhodes, and Richard J. A. Talbert, editors

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Fergus Millar

Edited by Hannah M. Cotton and Guy M. Rogers

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Preface

Fergus Millar, Camden Professor of Ancient History in the University of Oxford emeritus, is one of the most influential ancient historians of the twentieth century. Since the publication of *A Study of Cassius Dio* by Oxford University Press in 1964, Millar has published ten books, including two monumental studies, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (Duckworth, 1977) and *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (Harvard, 1993). These books have transformed the study of ancient history.

In his study of the role of the emperor in the Roman World Millar argued that the reign of Augustus inaugurated almost three centuries of relatively passive and inert government, in which the central power pursued few policies and was largely content to respond to pressures and demands from below. After nearly thirty years of scholarly reaction, *The Emperor in the Roman World* is now the dominant scholarly model of how the Roman Empire worked in practice.

Reviewers immediately hailed Millar's magisterial study of the Roman Near East as a "grand book on a grand topic" (*TLS*, 15 April 1994). In this grand book, displaying an unrivaled mastery of ancient literary, epigraphic, papyrological, and archaeological sources in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic, and other Semitic languages, Millar made the indigenous peoples of the Roman Near East, especially the Jews, central to our understanding of how and why the three great religions of the book, Rabbinic Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, evolved in a cultural context that was neither "eastern" nor "western." There can be no doubt that *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* will be the standard work on the subject for a long time to come.

Over the past few years, Millar has published two books, *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Michigan, 1998) and *The Roman Republic in Political Thought* (New England, 2002) on the politics of the Roman Republic and how those politics have been understood or misunderstood by political thinkers from the ancient world to the present. These books have challenged widely

held notions about the supposed oligarchic political character of the Roman Republic. Most recently, based upon the Sather Lectures of 2003 Millar now has produced his first work centrally focused upon late antiquity, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power, Belief and Reason under Theodosius II, 408–50*.

In the future Millar intends to return to the Roman Near East, for a study to be entitled *Society and Religion in the Roman Near East from Constantine to Mahomet*. In this study Millar will bring the story of Greco-Roman culture in the Near East from the early fourth century up to the Islamic invasions of the seventh century A.D. Apparently, the enormous task of writing a social history of the Near East from Alexander to Mahomet will not be left completely to someone else after all, as Millar prophesied in 1993 (*The Roman Near East*, pp. xii–xiii).

During the same period when he has produced these ground-breaking books, Millar also has published more than seventy essays on aspects of Greco-Roman history, from the Hellenistic period until the middle of the fifth century A.D. These essays have laid the foundations for or supplemented the ideas and arguments presented in Millar's very well known books. Some of these essays, such as "The Emperor, the Senate and the Provinces" (*Journal of Roman Studies* 56 [1966]: 156–66), or "Emperors, Frontiers and Foreign Relations, 31 B.C.–A.D. 378" (*Britannia* 13 [1982]: 1–23), have appeared in hitherto accessible journals and are widely regarded as classics of scholarship. But other outstanding essays, such as Millar's study "Polybius between Greece and Rome" (published in *Greek Connections: Essays on Culture and Diplomacy* [1987], 1–18), have been more difficult to locate, even for professional historians doing research in the field.

Therefore, the primary goal of our collection, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East*, is to bring together into three volumes the most significant of Millar's essays published since 1961 for the widest audience possible. The collection includes many articles that clearly will be of great intellectual interest and pedagogical use to scholars doing research and teaching in the different fields of the volume headings: Volume 1, *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*; Volume 2, *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*; and Volume 3, *The Greek World, the Jews, and the East*.

At the same time, we have conceived and organized the three volumes of *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* especially in order to make Millar's most significant articles readily available to a new generation of students, who increasingly may not have access to the specialty journals or edited volumes in which many of Millar's more recent articles have appeared.

The principle of arrangement of the essays in each of the three volumes is broadly chronological by subject matter treated within the ancient world.

We believe that this chronological arrangement of essays (rather than by publication date of the essays) gives intellectual coherence to each volume on its own and to the collection as a whole. Overall, as Millar himself has defined it, the subject of this collection is "the communal culture and civil government of the Graeco-Roman world, essentially from the Hellenistic period to the fifth century A.D." ("Author's Prologue," volume 1, p. 11).

Publication of a three-volume collection of essays, drawn from a wide variety of journals and edited volumes, over more than four decades of scholarly production, presents editors with some major stylistic challenges. Our collection contains fifty-four essays (in addition to a prologue and an epilogue written by Millar especially for the present collection). Most of these essays originally were published in learned journals or books, each of which had its own house style. Some learned journals also have changed their house styles over the time when Millar has published in them. For these reasons we have not attempted to bring all of the citations in the texts or notes of the articles in the collection into perfect stylistic conformity. Conformity for the sake of conformity makes no sense; moreover, to achieve such conformity would delay publication of the collection for years.

Rather, the stylistic goal of our collection has been to inform readers clearly and consistently where they can find the sources cited by Millar in his essays. To help achieve that goal we have included a list of frequently cited works (with abbreviations for those works) at the beginning of each volume. Thus, in the text or notes of the essays, readers will find abbreviations for frequently cited journals or books, which are fully cited in our lists at the beginning of each volume. For example, references in the notes to the abbreviation *JRS* refer to the *Journal of Roman Studies*. For the abbreviations themselves we have relied upon the standard list provided in *L'Année Philologique*. In certain cases, where there have been individual citations in the original texts or notes to more obscure collections of inscriptions or papyri, we have expanded the citations themselves in situ, rather than endlessly expanding our list of frequently cited works.

In accordance with Fergus Millar's wishes, for the sake of readers who do not know Latin or Greek, we have provided English translations of most of the extended Greek and Latin passages and some of the technical terms cited by Millar in the text and notes of the original essays. In doing so, we have followed the practice Fergus Millar himself adopted in *The Emperor in the Roman World* in 1977 and in *The Roman Near East* in 1993. We believe that providing these translations will help to make Millar's essays more widely accessible, which is the essential goal of the collection. Readers who wish to consult the original Greek, Latin, and Semitic passages or technical terms that we have

translated in the collection can look up those passages or technical terms in the original, published versions of the essays.

The editors would like to thank the many friends and colleagues who have helped us in the process of collecting these essays and preparing them for publication. We are indebted first of all to Lewis Bateman, formerly senior editor at the University of North Carolina Press, who suggested the basic arrangement of the essays into three volumes. We are also grateful to David Perry, editor-in-chief; Charles Grench, assistant director and senior editor; Pamela Upton, assistant managing editor; Amanda McMillan, assistant editor; and last but certainly not least, Brian MacDonald, our copyeditor, at the University of North Carolina Press, for their flexibility, advice, and support of the project.

Asaph Ben Tov, Masha Chormy, Tamar Herzig, Amir Marmor, Andrea Rotstein, Naomi Schneider, and Ori Shapir of the Hebrew University in Israel and Michal Molcho in Oxford retyped, converted, scanned, and corrected old and new articles into new format, thereby providing the editors with excellent manuscripts to work on. Dr. Nancy Thompson of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York provided invaluable editorial assistance at all stages. Our thanks also to Mark Rogers for his help with the maps. We owe a very unique debt to Priscilla Lange whose generosity, kindheartedness, and hospitality in Oxford has made all the difference. We also would like to express our gratitude to the Fellows of Brasenose College Oxford and All Souls College Oxford for their hospitality while we were working on this project.

Above all, however, the editors would like to thank Fergus Millar, for his scholarship, for his generosity, and for his friendship over three decades.

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Introduction

The Greek World, the Jews, and the East is the third and last volume in the series of Fergus Millar's collected essays, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East*. It stands to *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337*[1] as the second volume in the series stands to *The Emperor in the Roman World, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337*,[2] and, to a lesser extent, as the first volume in the series stands to *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic*.[3]

The two themes of the first volume, *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution* (2002), are the democratic nature of the Roman Republic and the transition from Republic to Principate, and its focal point, the cradle of the empire—the city of Rome and Italy. The second volume, *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire* (2004), is about imperial Rome; it deals with the empire as a system of government; only briefly and intermittently does it touch on local cultures in the provinces. The present volume is a study-in-depth of the impact of empire on the eastern part of the Empire. The "East" in the title is the Roman Near East, which eventually extended much further east than it had in the early Empire. With the incorporation of great tracts of the East, Rome ceased, also in the East, to be a Mediterranean empire.

Millar's Roman Near East is that part of the Roman world populated by Semitic-speaking and Semitic-writing peoples;[4] their encounter with

1. Based on the Carl Newell Jackson Lectures (Harvard, 1987), and published by Harvard University Press, 1993, and in paperback, 1995 (henceforth *RNE*).

2. Duckworth and Cornell University Press, 1977, and a second edition with an afterword, 1992 (henceforth *ERW*).

3. Based on the Jerome Lectures (Ann Arbor, Michigan, autumn 1993, and the American Academy in Rome, 1994) and published by Michigan University Press, 1998.

4. Egypt is absent from this volume as it is essentially absent from *RNE*; cf. Millar's epilogue in this volume (text to n. 14). Nonetheless, observe the caveats in the prologue to *RNE* against facile identification of language and ethnicity, and the assumption of a common Semitic culture.

Greco-Roman civilization is the leitmotif running through all of the articles in this volume. The study of ethnicity and language accounts for an apparently almost obsessive preoccupation with primary evidence, inscriptions and papyri.

I can offer no better description of the conception behind *RNE* and therefore also behind the articles collected here than that given by Fergus Millar himself in chapter 13 ("Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language, and Alien Wisdom," 1997) of the present volume, where he debunks the notion of "something distinctively 'oriental' in his thought," ascribed to the Neoplatonist philosopher solely because he was born in Tyre in 230s:

> *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993) . . . was intended precisely to draw a "map" of the Roman provinces of Syria, Mesopotamia, Judaea/Syria Palaestina, and Arabia, first in terms of language, as attested by documentary and literary evidence, and then of "ethnicity," as claimed or imputed by contemporaries. Its approach was thus severely empirical, and was designed, not—as is in any case impossible—to prove negatives (for instance, that a particular language was *not* in use at a particular time or place), but to show the limits of what we know now: that we have actual evidence for the use of a particular language only in particular places and at particular times. Suppositions about wider use are themselves hypotheses, which might of course receive support at any time from new evidence. But such suppositions, until supported, must on no account serve as the bases for interpreting the thought of Porphyry, or of other philosophers.

Many of the chapters in the present volume, albeit self-contained, are indeed preliminary studies for *RNE*, as their first footnote attests; others, looking backward to the Hellenistic period, precede the time span set by *RNE*; some, written after the completion of that work, look forward to its sequel; finally, the two last chapters go beyond *RNE*'s thematic scheme to discuss the Jewish diaspora in the West as well as in the East.

However, each of the chapters has a focal point, which in one way or another has been integrated into the vast canvas of *RNE*, or at least has been foreshadowed in it. Their innovativeness, originality, and individuality are thus in danger of being lost to the unwary and inexperienced reader of Fergus Millar's work—which now spans almost half a century. It is one of the aims of the present collection, as it was of the previous two, to recapture the vigor and ground-breaking freshness of the originals for a young and uninitiated audience and recreate it for others.

The six chapters of the first part, "The Hellenistic World and Rome," be-

long to the Hellenistic period, before *RNE* begins, yet it would be no exaggeration to say that the first chapter, "The Problem of Hellenistic Syria" (1987), has it all in a nutshell. Here is struck the first chord of dissent from and challenge to widely accepted and much venerated traditions. Millar's empirical approach needed no more than a few strokes to sweep away numerous comfortable views on the time-honored concept of Hellenization as fusion (*Verschmeltzung*) of Greek and local cultures. "The 'Hellenistic' Syria, with a distinctive mixed culture" turns out to be a product of its Roman phase, "that which evolved under the Roman Empire" (chapter 1, text to n. 104 below). The advent of Rome brought with it considerable intensification of the process of Hellenization as attested in the written corpus as well as in material culture. Until then our evidence for the Greek presence in Syria is "limited, variable, and erratic." Even more disconcerting is the piercing question: "the Hellenisation of what?" What do we know of the Achaemenid period in Syria? This is taken up again in *RNE*: "So far as our evidence goes, the preceding Hellenistic period has left almost nothing which can count as the expression of a regional or a local culture" (22). As it happens the indigenous local cultures *too* owe their very appearance in the historical record to their adoption of the "epigraphic habit" of the Greco-Roman world, mostly in Greek, but sometimes in their own languages, under Roman sway. A tempting solution to "the amnesia of the Semitic cultures" is, of course, the model offered by Glen Bowersock, namely that "one of the functions of Graeco-Roman culture in this region may precisely have been to offer a vehicle for the expression of an indigenous local culture" in the area.[5]

The counterpoint to this is the subject of chapter 2: "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation" (1983), where true fusion of indigenous and Greek cultures in the old sense seems to have taken place. However, the Hellenization of the Phoenician cities began long before Alexander and has rarely been discussed in this context. A Jewish version of the fusion is the book of Daniel (chapter 3: "Hellenistic History in a Near Eastern Perspective: The Book of Daniel," 1997), written in the 160s B.C., which may borrow from Hellenism "the notion of history as a succession of world empires," but it does so only in order to reaffirm Jewish monotheism against the Hellenistic persecutor Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Neither should the events of 167–164 B.C. be seen as the culmination of a profound and long process of evolution within Judaism, assimilating it to Hellenism (chapter 4: "The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's

5. Millar's phrasing in *RNE*, 399, referring to G. R. Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Thomas Spencer Jerome Lectures, 1990), esp. chap. 3.

'Judaism and Hellenism,'" 1978). We should strongly resist the tendency of modern historiography to search for deeper reasons and "look to sources other than the reigning Seleucid king himself for the explanation of a persecution carried out by royal command and by royal agents" (chapter 4, text to n. 36; cf. *RNE*, 12). Instead, we should see the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem for what it was: in no sense syncretistic but the arbitrary imposition of a pagan cult.

The reader of chapter 5, "Polybius between Greece and Rome" (1987), where Millar denies the attribution of Roman sympathies to the historian, cannot but recall Millar's first book, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (1964). In the span of time separating the two, a Greek historian not only ceased to regard Rome as the invader, but could become Roman himself while "staying Greek"—a fusion of cultures that could rightly be described as Hellenism. In similar vein, the Greek city of the imperial period (chapter 6, "The Greek City in the Roman Period," 1993) "would be more correctly described as 'Graeco-Roman': that is, as a fusion or mélange of languages and constitutions, types of public entertainment, architectural forms, and religious institutions" (text to n. 31), detached from its place of birth, Greece and Asia Minor, and transcending even the borders of the Empire—"a symbol of the fact that in the end *Graecia capta* did indeed imprison her captor."

The second part is rather heterogeneous and the least cohesive of the three, but it is far from chaotic. All six chapters reveal the complex and subtle impact of the Roman presence in the East, never to be dismissed, never to be lost to sight, but always working in intricate and unexpected ways. Each of them raises problems to which solutions and interpretations have been offered in the past, solutions and interpretations that are now shown to be less than satisfactory and sometimes patently wrong.

Chapter 7, "Reflections on the Trials of Jesus" (1990), is dedicated to Geza Vermes, coeditor with Fergus Millar of the new Schürer.[6] Of all the chapters in this volume, this is the most likely to give the reader a taste of what it was like to be Fergus Millar's student, to take lessons from him in how to read an ancient text and in how to choose the more veridical version of the course of events. In dealing with the trial of Jesus, "we must not proceed by amalgamating data from all four gospels" nor, surprisingly, by weighing arguments based on coherence and plausibility, but rather by choosing the one that has the better grasp "on the realities of Palestine under Roman domination," which in this case means the one that conforms "with the world as

6. E. Schürer, G. Vermes, and F. Millar, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, 175 B.C.–A.D. 135*, vols. I–III (Edinburgh, 1973–87).

portrayed by Josephus." The preference, which is "no more than an hypothesis," goes to John's Gospel.

The next two chapters belong together for two reasons. First, a formal reason: it was our editorial decision, contrary to our practice throughout, not to translate the texts written in the ancient languages in these two chapters. These are in essence linguistic papers based on documents, focusing on borrowings from one language to another. Although integral to the central theme of the volume, these two chapters do not, and can not, make sense unless the relevant material is retained in the original (or in the case of Semitic languages in upper-case transliteration). To "transcribe" and translate this material would blur the intellectual point.

Second, both chapters isolate and explore the Roman component in the mixture of cultures characteristic of the Roman Near East and its impact. This is seen in the foundation of colonies or the conferral of the title *colonia* on native cities (chapter 8: "The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations," 1990—virtually a monograph), and in the limited use of the Latin language (chapter 9: "Latin in the Epigraphy of the Roman Near East," 1995). The bilingual and trilingual documents from Palmyra discussed in chapter 9 hammer home the point made by Millar already in his celebrated article on "Epigraphy,"[7] namely that the richness of the epigraphic tradition comes fully into its own only when epigraphic texts in different languages, the contemporaneous expressions of different but related cultures, are studied together.[8]

A test case for the survival and potential vitality of local cultures underneath the dominant Greek surface is the subject of chapter 10, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia, and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture, and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria" (1971), which examines the hypothesis that in the events of the 260s and the 270s in Roman Syria "either a man from Samosata or a ruler of Palmyra could have seen themselves as in any sense representatives of the 'Orient' as against the Graeco-Roman world."

The next two chapters should also be read together. They explore the true "Orient," the one beyond the Euphrates and outside the classical world, in

7. Originally published in 1983 = chapter 2 in F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* I: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution* (2002), 44; cf. section 3 of the epilogue to this volume: "A New Approach to Ancient Languages?"

8. The innovative project now under way to create a comprehensive multilingual corpus of all inscriptions, both published and unpublished, from the territory of present-day Israel, from the fourth century B.C.E. to the seventh century C.E. (*Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae* = *CIIP*) owes Millar a great debt; see Cotton et alii, "Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae," *ZPE* 127 (1999), 307–8.

two ways. First, we follow the possibility of the existence of long-distance overland trade with central Asia, with its necessary corollary, caravan cities in the sense used by Millar's favorite historian, M. I. Rostovtzeff, and with consequences for our understanding of "the ancient economy" (chapter 11: "Caravan Cities: The Roman Near East and Long-Distance Trade by Land," 1998; cf. *RNE*, 16). And, second, we are taken on a kaleidoscopic journey through the six centuries following Alexander's conquests, tracing the impact of Greco-Roman culture in the Asian land-mass (chapter 12: "Looking East from the Classical World: Colonialism, Culture, and Trade from Alexander the Great to Shapur I," 1998).

The third part, "Jews and Others," revolves around ethnicity and self-definition of various groups. Chapter 13 ("Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language, and Alien Wisdom," 1997) has already been mentioned, and we may pass on to chapter 14, dedicated to the memory of Menahem Stern, author of the invaluable *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols., Jerusalem, 1974–84),[9] whose life and work reaffirm Millar's profound belief in the lasting strength of the "national, or ethnic, historical and cultural traditions" of the Jewish people. "The *Arabes* or *Arabioi* of antiquity have so far not had a Menahem Stern to collect and analyse all the classical references to them, which begin in the fifth century with Aeschylus and Herodotus" (chapter 14, text to n. 6). Their legendary common genealogy, however, was not supplied within Greco-Roman mythology but, ironically, within Jewish biblical history, by none other than the Jewish Josephus who saw in them the descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar, thereby making them legitimate heirs to Jewish monotheism, with mighty consequences for the history of Islam ("Hagar, Ishmael, Josephus, and the Origins of Islam," 1993; cf. *RNE*, 8).

Chapter 15 ("Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, A.D. 325–450: Language, Religion, and Culture," 1998) encapsulates succinctly the first part of the planned sequel to *RNE*, taking the story of ethnicity, religion, and language down to the middle of the fifth century. The continuing predominance of Greek in this network of Greek cities and in their territories, despite the gradual emergence of Syriac within the Christian church, leaves the complex and fascinating issues of ethnicity, communal identity, and religious belief outside the lines of linguistic demarcation.

It is to be hoped that the challenge thrown down by Millar in chapter 16, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule" (1998), will be picked up and the rich epigraphic, papyrological, and architectural evidence will be used to write the history of Hellenistic, Parthian, and Roman Dura. At the very least,

9. Volume 1 was reviewed by Millar in *SCI* 3 (1976): 173–76.

the legal documents, their formulae, diplomatics, and language, should be studied (chapter 16, text to notes 27–28) and compared with their counterparts from other sites in the Roman Near East—the documents from the Judean Desert and the archives from the Euphrates, from Nessana, and now from Petra.[10]

The last two chapters (chapter 17: "The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and Christianity, A.D. 312–438," 1992, and chapter 18: "Christian Emperors, Christian Church, and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, A.D. 379–450," 2004) are about the Jewish diaspora. Not that the Jews are ever out of sight elsewhere in this volume or in *RNE*. An example is the typical statement in the introductory pages to chapter 14:

> For what distinguished the Jews from all the other groups which came within the orbit of Graeco-Roman civilisation was precisely the fact that they already possessed a national religious history, the Bible (even if not yet quite complete in its canonical form), written in a literary language entirely independent of Greek or Latin. Existing as a corpus of literary works, the Bible could be and was translated into Greek in the Hellenistic period.

It is legitimate to ask if the same holds true for Judaism and the Jews in the diaspora as for those of Palestine. At any rate in the period discussed in these last two chapters, in Palestine as elsewhere the Jews, now no longer a majority, were caught between Christianity and a declining paganism, and the issues cannot have been fundamentally different from those outside. What is beyond dispute after reading these two chapters is "that the history of Judaism in late antiquity cannot be confined to Palestine, for we can see that there was a very significant Jewish life in the diaspora" (chapter 18, last paragraph).

With this the third and last volume in the series comes to an end, but not completely; we can trust Fergus Millar not to sit idle when "there is work to be done." The publication of articles continues.

We may fittingly end with the traditional Jewish exhortation on finishing the reading of each book of the Pentateuch: ḤZQ ḤZQ WNTḤZQ, which can be loosely translated as "be strong and of good courage."

Hannah M. Cotton
Jerusalem
30 July 2005

10. Cf. H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35.

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Abbreviations

AAAS
Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes
AAES, *Ann. Arch. Ar. Syr.*
American Archaeological Expedition to Syria
Abbott and Johnson, *Municipal Administration*
F. F. Abbott and A. C. Johnson, *Municipal Administration in the Roman Empire* (1926)
Abh. d. Kön. Ges. der Wiss. zu Göttingen
Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen
ABSA
Annals of the British School at Athens
AC
L'Antiquité Classique
ADAJ, *Ann. Dept. Ant. Jordan*
Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan
AE, *Ann. Épig.*
L'Année Épigraphique
AJA, *Am. Journ. Arch.*
American Journal of Archaeology
AJAH
American Journal of Ancient History
AJBA
Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology
AJPh
American Journal of Philology
Am. Num. Soc. Mus. Notes
American Numismatic Society, Museum Notes
Anat. Stud.
Anatolian Studies

Ann. Sc. N. Sup. Pisa
Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa
ANRW
Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
BAR Int. Ser.
British Archaeological Reports, International Series
BASOR
Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BCH
Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique
BE, *Bull. Épig.*
Bulletin Épigraphique, published in *Revue des Études Grecques*
BEFAR, *Bib. Ec. Fr. Ath. Rom.*
Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome
BES
Bulletin d'Épigraphie Sémitique, published in Syria
BGU
Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen (later Staatlichen) *Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden*
BIAB
Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Bulgare
Bibl. Arch. Rev.
Biblical Archaeology Review
BICS
Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
BJ, *Bonn. Jahrb.*
Bonner Jahrbücher des Rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande
BMC Arabia, *BMC Mesopotamia*
G. F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Arabia, Mesopotamia and Persia in the British Museum*
BMC Palestine
G. F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Palestine in the British Museum*
BMC Phoenicia
G. F. Hill, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phoenicia in the British Museum*
BMC Syria
W. W. Wroth, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Galatia, Cappadocia and Syria in the British Museum*
Bull. Mus. Beyrouth
Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth

Bull. Sch. Or. and Afr. Stud.
Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
Bull. Soc. Ant. Alex.
Bulletin de Société des Antiquaires d'Alexandria
Bull. Soc. Nat. Ant. France Bulletin
de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de la France
CAH
Cambridge Ancient History
CCL, Corpus Christ. Lat., Corp. Christ. Lat.
Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
Chron. d'Ég., CE
Chronique d'Égypte
CIG
Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum
CIL
Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CIS
Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum
Class. Phil., CPh
Classical Philology
Corp. Ins. Jud., CIJ
J.-B. Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum. Recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du III^e^ siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VII^e^ siècle de notre ère* I–II (1936–52)
Corpus. Gloss. Lat.
Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum
CPJ
Corpus Papyrorum Iudaicarum I–III
CQ
Classical Quarterly
CR
Classical Review
CRAI
Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions
CSCO
Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Latinorum
CSEL
Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
Dam. Mitt.
Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Damaszener Abteilung

Devijver, *Pros. milit. Equestr.*
H. Devijver, *Prosopographia Militiarum Equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum* I–V (1976–93)
Dial. di Arch.
Dialoghi di Archeologia
Diz. Epig.
Dizionario Epigrafico
DJD
Discoveries in the Judaean Desert I–XXIX (Oxford, 1955–)
EHR, *Econ. Hist. Rev.*
Economic History Review
Eph. Theol. Lovanienses
Ephemerides Theologiae Lovanienses
Epigr. Anat.
Epigraphica Anatolica
FGrHist., *FGrH*
F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*
FHG
C. Müller, Th. Müller, et al., *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* I–V (1853–70)
GGM
Geographi Graeci Minores, ed. C. Müller (1855–61)
GRBS, *Gr. Rom. and Byz. St.*
Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
HSCPh, *HSCP*, *Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.*
Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
HThR, *Harv. Th. Rev.*
Harvard Theological Review
ID, *Ins. Délos*
Inscriptions de Délos (1926–29, 1935)
IEJ
Israel Exploration Journal
IG
Inscriptiones Graecae
IGBulg.
Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae
IGLS, *Ins. Gr. et Lat. de la Syrie*
Inscriptions Grecques et Latines de la Syrie
IGR
Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes

IJudO
: *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* I: *Eastern Europe*, ed. D. Noy, A. Panyatov, and A. Bloedhorn; II: *Kleinasien*, ed. W. Ameling; III: *Syria and Cyprus*, ed. D. Noy and H. Bloedhorn (2004)

I. K. Alexandria Troas
: *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien: Alexandria Troas*

I. K. Central Pisidia
: *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien: Central Pisidia*

I. K. Lampsakos
: *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien: Lampsakos*

ILS
: *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* I–III

Ins.
: *Didyma* II, *Die Inschriften*

Inventaire, *Inv.*
: *Inventaire des Inscriptions de Palmyre* I–, ed. J. Cantineau (1930–)

IRT
: *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitana*

Isr. Num. Journ.
: *Israel Numismatic Journal*

Ist. Mitt.
: *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Istanbuler Abteilung*

Jahrb. d. Öst. Byz. Ges.
: *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft*

Jahrb. f. Ant. u. Chr.
: *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*

JBL, *Journ. Bib. Lit.*
: *Journal of Biblical Literature*

JEA
: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*

JHS, *Journ. Hell. Stud.*
: *Journal of Hellenic Studies*

JJS, *Journ. Jew. Stud.*
: *Journal of Jewish Studies*

JNES
: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*

Journ. Med. Stud.
: *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*

JQR
: *Jewish Quarterly Review*

JRA
Journal of Roman Archaeology
JRS, *Journ. Rom. Stud.*
Journal of Roman Studies
JS
Journal des Savants
JSJ
Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSS
Journal of Semitic Studies
JThS, *JThSt*, *Journ. Theol. Stud.*, *J. Theol. St.*, *J. Th. St.*
Journal of Theological Studies
KAI
Kanaanaïsche und Aramaïsche Inschriften[3], ed. H. Donner and W. Rölling (1971–76)
MAMA
Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua
Med. Hist. Rev.
Mediterranean Historical Review
Mél. Univ. St. Joseph, *MUSJ*
Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph
Mém. Miss. Arch. Iran
Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique Française en Iran
Mém. Soc. Nat. Ant. Fr.
Mémoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France
Migne, *PG*
See *PG*
MUSJ
See *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph*
NC, *Numis. Chron.*
Numismatic Chronicle
Num. Notes and Monog.
Numismatic Notes and Monographs
OA
Oriens Antiquus
OGIS
Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae I–II
P.Cair.Zen., *PCZ*
Zenon Papyri, Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire I–V

P. Dura
The Excavations at Dura-Europos conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Final Report V, Part I, *The Parchments and Papyri*, ed. C. B. Welles, R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam (1959)
P. Lond.
Greek Papyri in the British Museum
P. Oxy.
The Oxyrhynchus Papyri
PAES
Princeton Archaeological Expedition to Syria
PAT
Palmyrene Aramaic Texts, ed. D. R. Hillers and E. Cussini (1996)
PCPS, *Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc.*, *PCPhS*, *PCPS*, *Proc.*
Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society
PEQ
Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PG
Patrologia Graeca
PL
Patrologia Latina
PO, *Patr. Or.*
Patrologia Orientalis
Proc. Brit. Acad.
Proceedings of the British Academy
P-W, *RE*
Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der Klassischen Altertumswissenchaft*
QDAP
Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine
RAC
Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RB
Revue Biblique
RE
See P-W
Rec. Arch. Or.
Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale
REG
Revue des Études Grecques
Rev. Ét. Juives
Revue des Études Juives

Rev. hist. relig., *Rev. Hist. Rel.*, *RHR*
Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
Rev. Num., *RN*
Revue Numismatique
Rev. Or. Chr.
Revue de l'Orient Chrétien
Rev. Phil.
Revue Philologique
Rev. Sci. Rel.
Revue de Sciences Religieuses
Riv. Arch. Cr.
Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana
RPC
The Roman Provincial Coinage I–II, ed. A. Burnett, M. Amandry, and P. P. Ripollès (1992–)
Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History*
E. Schürer, G. Vermes, and F. Millar, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, 175* B.C.–A.D. *135* I–III (1973–87)
SCI
Scripta Classica Israelica
SDB
Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible
SEG
Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum
Sel. Pap.
Select Papyri. The Loeb Classical Library
SNG
Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum
Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*
M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* I–III (1974–84)
Syll.^{3}
Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum I–IV^{3}
TAPhA
Transactions of the American Philological Association
TLS
Times Literary Supplement
YCS, *Yale Class. Stud.*
Yale Classical Studies
ZDMG
Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

ZDPV
Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins
ZPE, Zeitschr. f. Pap. u. Epig.
Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik
ZSS, ZRG
Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Romanistische Abteilung

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Rome, the Greek World,
and the East

York
Chester
BRITANNIA
Tamesis (Thames)
Camulodunum
Londinium
Albis (Elbe)
CHERUSCI
Colonia Agrippinensis
Bonna
GERMANIA INFERIOR
CHATTI
Rhenus (Rhine)
Moguntiacum
BELGICA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
LUGDUNENSIS
GERMANIA SUPERIOR
MARCOMANNI
QUADI
Danuvius (Danube)
Liger (Loire)
RAETIA
Carnuntum
NORICUM
PANNONIA SUPERIOR
Dravus
AQUITANIA
Lugdunum
Rhodanus (Rhône)
TRANSPADANA
Alpes
PANNONIA INFERIOR
Aquileia
Mediolanum
Padus (Po)
Savus
Burdigala
Garumna (Garonne)
NARBONENSIS
ALPES COTTIAE
Arausio
ALPES MARITIMAE
LIGURIANS
Sirmium
DALMATIA
Legio
Nemausus
Arelate
Genua
Tolosa
Narbo Martius
Massilia
Apeninus M.
Ariminum
Pyrenaei M.
Iberus (Ebro)
Numantia
Emporiae
Tiberis
Rome
CORSICA
Aleria
LUSITANIA
HISPANIA CITERIOR
Tagus
Tarraco
Dyrrhachium
Emerita
Neapolis
Saguntum
Brundisium
SARDINIA
Balearic Is.
Apollonia
Corduba
Baetis
BAETICA
SICILIA
Carthago Nova
Gades
Carteia
Caesarea
Carthago
Agrigentum
Cirta
Syracusae
Lambaesis
Bulla Regia
Volubilis
NUMIDIA
AFRICA
MAURITANIA TINGITANIA
MAURITANIA CAESARIENSIS
MEDITERRANEAN
Lepcis Magna
0
300 mi.

The Roman Empire, ca. 160 A.D.

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PART I

The Hellenistic World and Rome

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CHAPTER ONE

The Problem of Hellenistic Syria[*]

> And it came to pass after the victory of Alexander the son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out from the land of Kittim and smote Darius, king of the Persians and Medes . . . and started many wars and conquered many fortified places and slew the kings of the earth. . . . And his sons ruled, each in his own place, and after his death they all assumed diadems, and his sons (ruled) after him for many years and multiplied evils in the land.
>
> —1 Maccabees 1.1–9

The first book of Maccabees in its opening paragraph reflects an important aspect of the impact of Hellenistic rule in Syria, the prevalence of conflict, war, and instability. It does also, however, illustrate something quite different, the possibility of a communal historical consciousness and a national culture which might provide a framework within which a community in

[*] First published in A. Kuhrt and S. M. Sherwin-White, eds., *Hellenism in the East* (London, 1987), 110–33.

The work on which this survey of the problem of Hellenistic Syria is based was carried out at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, during an enjoyable and profitable visit from January to April 1984. Successive versions were presented at seminars held at the institute and, in autumn 1984, at the Institute of Classical Studies, London. The paper has benefitted from assistance, advice, and criticism from the editors and from a number of friends and colleagues, notably G. W. Bowersock, Pierre Briant, P. M. Fraser, the late J. F. Gilliam, Chr. Habicht, and Javier Teixidor. It will readily be accepted that the remaining imperfections are due to the author. There are many points at which systematic up-dating, for instance as regards epigraphic finds, could be carried out. But that is a task for a new study, and the chapter has been left as it was in 1987.

the Syrian region could have absorbed and reacted to the fact of Greek conquest. That this was true of the Jewish community of Jerusalem is beyond all question.[1] 1 Maccabees, written originally in Hebrew, directly continues the tradition of Old Testament historiography. It has indeed also been argued that Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were also written in the Hellenistic period.[2] If that is dubious, the book of Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sira) was certainly written around 200 B.C. or soon after, and Daniel, in its final form, in the 160s.[3]

The culture of Judaea and Jerusalem thus exhibits both a profound continuity with the pre-Greek past and an equally undeniable absorption of Greek elements.[4] As is well known, the first attested use of the word *hellenismos* comes in 2 Maccabees (4.13) and refers to the enrolment of the Jerusalemites as "Antiochians," the setting up of a gymnasium, and the wearing of Greek clothes.

We can therefore use Maccabees to pose at least one of the many questions which can in principle be asked about Hellenistic Syria. By "Hellenistic" in this sense I mean simply the period from Alexander to the mid-first century B.C. By "Syria" I mean anywhere west of the Euphrates and south of the Amanus Mountains—essentially therefore the area west of the Euphrates where Semitic languages were used: Aramaic in its various dialects, Phoenician, Hebrew, and earlier forms of Arabic. This begs a question about Asia Minor (and especially Cilicia), from which Aramaic documents are known, and a far more important one about northern Mesopotamia and about Babylonia. Should we not, that is, see the various Aramaic-speaking areas of the Fertile Crescent as representing a single culture, or at any rate closely connected cultures, and therefore not attempt to study the one area without the others?

The first question is one of cultural identity. Can we observe elsewhere in Syria, that is, outside Judaea, either the continued survival of a non-Greek culture or the fusion (*Verschmelzung*) in Droysen's sense of Greek and non-Greek cultures? As I have argued elsewhere, there is perhaps just enough evi-

1. F. Millar, "The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's 'Judaism and Hellenism,'" *JJS* 29 (1978): 1–21 (= chapter 4 in the present volume).

2. O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (trans.) (1965), 529–30.

3. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III, 198–99, 245–46. See also F. Millar, "Hellenistic History in a Near Eastern Perspective: The Book of Daniel," in P. Cartledge, P. Garnsey, and E. Gruen, eds., *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History, and Historiography* (1997), 89–104 (= chapter 3 in the present volume).

4. M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans.) I–II (1974).

dence to show that this was the case in the Phoenician cities of the coast.[5] But elsewhere, with the exception of Judaea, we meet a problem which haunts one and all of the questions we would like to ask. If we are going to ask about the nature or limits of Hellenisation, there is a prior question: the Hellenisation of what? Whether we think of northern Syria, the Orontes valley, or Damascus, or present-day Jordan, we find that almost nothing is known, from either literary or documentary or archaeological evidence, about what these places were like in the Achaemenid period.[6] Our best evidence for the personal life, nomenclature, and religious observances of non-Jewish Aramaic speakers in the Achaemenid period comes in fact from the private letters in Aramaic from Egypt.[7] The not very numerous monumental inscriptions in Aramaic from Syria are no later than the seventh century B.C.[8] The only known cuneiform archive from Syria, found near Aleppo and dating to the Neo-Babylonian and early Achaemenid periods,[9] will serve to remind us of how much we do not know. The only cuneiform tablet of the Achaemenid period so far discovered in Jordan is, however, more revealing.[10] Written in Harran in the first year of a king named Darius, it records a sale by two people with Aramaic names to a person whose father has the Edomite/Idumaean name of Qusu-yada'. It was found at Tell Tawilan near Petra and thus clearly reflects the type of movement and interchange round the Fertile Crescent hinted at above. It is also significant that the same Idumaean name reappears on an Aramaic-Greek bilingual *ostrakon* of the third century B.C. (text to n. 49 below). By contrast, formal inscriptions in Aramaic are rare.[11] Otherwise, it is only in Teima in north-west Arabia, on the southern borders of what would

5. F. Millar, "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation," *Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc.* 209 (1983): 55–71 (= chapter 2 in the present volume).

6. The archaeological evidence is largely confined to individual domestic or decorative objects and weaponry: see P. R. S. Moorey, "Iranian Troops at Deve Hüyük in the Fifth Century B.C.," *Levant* 7 (1975): 108–17; P. R. S. Moorey, *Cemeteries of the First Millenium B.C. at Deve Hüyük* (1980); only the evidence from the Judaean area has been systematically assembled by E. Stern, *The Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period* (1982).

7. J. T. Milik, "Les papyrus aramaéens d'Hermopolis et les cultes syro-phéniciens en Egypte perse," *Biblica* 48 (1967): 546ff.

8. H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*[2] I–III (1964–68), nos. 201–27; A. Abou Assaf, P. Bordreuil, and A. R. Millard, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne*, Recherches sur les civilisations 7 (10): Etudes assyriologiques (1982).

9. F. M. Fales, "Remarks on the Neirab Texts," *OA* 12 (1973): 131–42.

10. S. Dalley, "The Cuneiform Tablet from Tell Tawailan," *Levant* 16 (1984): 19–22.

11. Though note that of Tobiah from 'Araq el-Emir; see B. Mazar, "The Tobiads," *IEJ* 7 (1957): 137–45, 229–38.

later be the Nabataean kingdom, that we can find Aramaic inscriptions, west of the Euphrates and south of the Amanus, in the Achaemenid period itself.[12] Aramaic ostraca of the Persian period are, however, known from a number of sites in Israel, for example, Beer-Sheva and Arad.[13] It can reasonably be expected that archaeological investigation in areas outside present-day Israel would produce more; and Aramaic material of the Persian period has, for instance, been discovered at Tell el Mazar in Jordan.[14]

For the moment our evidence on Achaemenid Syria is very limited,[15] and what we know of its social and economic history is still largely dependent on passing allusions in classical sources, for instance, Xenophon's account of his march across northern Syria from Myriandrus, a Phoenician trading post, through an area of villages, and one satrapal palace and associated *paradeisos*, to the city of Thapsacus on the Euphrates (*Anab*. 1.4.6–11). There were apparently no cities on the route which they took between the coast and the Euphrates at that moment. Did they deliberately avoid Aleppo, or had it declined as a city? Of the inland cities of the Syrian region which may still have been inhabited in the Persian period, only Damascus is really certain. It was there that Parmenio captured the treasures of Darius (Curt. 3.12.27; Arrian *Anab*. 2.11.9–10); and Strabo 16.2.20 (756) says that it was the chief city of Syria in the Persian period. Berossus also reports (*FGrHist*. 680 F 11) that Artaxerxes II (405/404–359/358 B.C.) set up images of Artemis Anaitis in various places, including Ecbatana, Babylon, Susa, Sardis, and Damascus.

Our ignorance of Achaemenid Syria is a major problem also for any assessment of the economic consequences of the Macedonian conquest. From a "Marxist" standpoint, for instance, the late Heinz Kreissig argued that the Seleucid empire continued to be based on the "Asiatic mode of production,"[16]

12. H. Donner and W. Röllig (n. 8), nos. 228–30; F. V. Winnett and W. L. Reed, *Ancient Records from North Arabia* (1970); see G. Bawden et al., "The Archaeological Resources of Ancient Taymā: Preliminary Archaeological Investigations at Taymā," *Atlal* 4 (1980): 69–106; new texts in A. Livingstone et al., "Taima: Recent Soundings and New Inscribed Material," *Atlal* 7 (1983): 102ff.

13. J. Naveh, "The Aramaic Ostracon," in Y. Aharoni, ed., *Beer-Sheba* I: *Excavations at Tel Beer-Sheba 1969–71 Seasons*, Publications of the Institute of Archaeology 2 (1973), 79–82; J. Naveh, "The Aramaic Ostraca from Tell Arad," in Y. Aharoni, *Arad Inscriptions*, Judaean Desert Studies (1981), 153–76.

14. K. Yassine, "Tell el-Mazar, Field I. Preliminary Report of Area G. H. L. and M: The Summit," *ADAJ* 27 (1983): 495ff.

15. See, e.g., A. F. Rainey, "The Satrapy beyond the River," *AJBA* (1969): 51–78.

16. H. Kreissig, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Seleukidenreich: Die Eigentums-und die Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse*, Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur der Antike 16 (1978).

meaning the labour of peasants who were not slaves and owned their own means of production but were dependent on those to whom they paid their surplus. Pierre Briant, from a similar standpoint, once equated the "Asiatic mode of production" with the "royal economy" briefly sketched in the Aristotelian *Oeconomica* 2.[17] But if we look for specific and provable instances of dependent villages in Syria in the Achaemenid period, we will find precisely, and only, those in northern Syria which Xenophon states had been granted to Parysatis (*Anab*. 1.4.9). We need not dispute Briant's generalisation that the village was a predominant social formation throughout the Near and Middle East through both the Achaemenid and the Hellenistic periods. But we do *not* know what was the typical set of existing economic relationships into which the Macedonian conquest obtruded.

The fact of military conquest is indeed about all that is clear from the early Hellenistic period. Beyond that we would want to ask, for instance, some of the following questions: (1) What new Greek cities were founded, when, and where? (2) Were they accompanied by Greek or Macedonian settlement in the surrounding territories? (3) What substantial changes, if any, accompanied the acquisition of Greek *names* by existing cities? (4) Was there significant immigration and settlement by Greek speakers outside the context of city foundations? (5) Are we to think of a degree of social and cultural fusion between Greek settlers and the existing population, or rather, as Briant has argued,[18] of the Greeks forming separate enclaves? (6) Did the period see the introduction into Syria of what "Marxists" define as the "ancient mode of production," that is, one based on a monetary economy, private property, and the exploitation of slave labour? Any temptation to make sweeping generalisations in this topic should be tempered by the important evidence of the papyri from the Wadi Dâliyeh, north of Jericho.[19] They date to the third quarter of the fourth century, and may well have been deposited in the cave where they were found in the aftermath of the Samaritan rising of circa 332 B.C. One document of 335 B.C. records the sale of a slave for thirty-five pieces of silver. There were also a number of coins, imported and local (especially Tyrian), as well as seal impressions.

These documents are also potentially relevant to a final question: (7) What

17. P. Briant, "Colonisation hellénistique et populations indigènes: la phase d'installation," in *Rois, tributs et paysans: études sur les formations tributaires du Moyen-Orient ancien*, Centre de Recherches d'Histoire Anciennes 43 (1982), 248 (originally published in *Klio* 60 [1978]: 57–92).

18. Briant (n. 17) 227–62.

19. M. J. W. Leith, *Wadi Daliyeh* I: *The Wadi Daliyeh Seal Impressions*, DJD XXIV (1997), and D. M. Gropp, *Wadi Daliyeh* II: *The Samaria Papyri from Wadi Daliyeh*, DJD XXVIII (2001).

changes were brought about, outside the area of Greek settlement, in the culture of the inhabitants, for example, in literacy? What combination of literacy was there in Semitic languages (Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, Phoenician, and later Nabataean Aramaic), in Greek, in both, or in neither?

The only substantial area where it is beyond question that new city foundations transformed the map of the region is northern Syria, with Seleucus I's foundation of Antioch, Apamea, Seleucia, and Laodicea, a process brilliantly described by Seyrig.[20] Near Antioch there was said to have been briefly a city "Antigoneia," founded by Antigonus Monophthalmus and settled by Athenians (so Malalas, apparently following a chronographer named Pausanias, *FGrHist*. 854 F 10). At Laodicea there was similarly said to have been a village called "Mazabda," and at Apamea one called "Pharnace" (*FGrHist*. F 10, 9–10).

Excavations on this site have revealed one object from the Persian period, a fragment of an Attic pyxis.[21] What is significant is that it is *only*, so far as I have discovered to date, in the area of these cities that we find smaller settlements with Greek or Macedonian names. For instance, Diodotus Tryphon, who seized the Seleucid throne in the 140s, came from a *phrourion* (fortified settlement) called "Cassiana," which, like others with the names "Larissa," "Megara," "Apollonia," and so forth, belonged to Apamea, where Tryphon was educated (Strabo 16.2.10 [752]). Even so, there were also villages in the territory of Apamea with non-Greek names, like the *kōmē Kaprozabadaiōn* (the village of the Karpazabadaioi) which an inscription reveals.[22] The word "Kapro" reflects Kfar, meaning "village," in Aramaic, as in Hebrew.[23] Some thirty miles east of Antioch, there was a village with the name "Maroneia," which may be Greek; but, at any rate in the fourth century A.D., a person from there would speak Syriac (Jerome, *V. Malchi* 2). Similarly, twenty kilometres north of Laodicea there was a place called "Heraclea Thalasse" (*IGLS* IV, 1252, of 108/7 B.C.; cf. Pliny, *NH* 5, 79). If there was any area where Greek settlement may have produced significant direct effects on property

20. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités Syriennes, 92: Séleucus I et la fondation de la monarchie syrienne," *Syria* 47 (1970): 290–311 = slightly earlier version in English: "Seleucus I and the Foundation of Hellenistic Syria," in W. A. Ward, ed., *The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilization*, Papers Presented to the Archaeological Symposium at the American University of Beirut, March 1967 (1968), 53–63.

21. J. Balty and J. C. Balty, "Apamée de Syrie, archéologie et histoire I. Des origines à la Tetrarchie," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 103–34.

22. *IG* XIV 2558; photo in J. C. Balty, "Nouvelles données topographiques et chronologiques à Apamée de Syrie," *AAAS* 21 (1971): 131–35; see *BE* 1960, 95.

23. See *BE* 1958, no. 295.

relations and "modes of production," it will have been in the territories surrounding the new cities of the north Syrian tetrapolis.

Elsewhere concrete evidence for new city foundations of the earlier Hellenistic period is remarkably sparse. There were none along the Phoenician coast or in Idumaea or Judaea. Late sources record that a Macedonian settlement was established by Alexander or Perdiccas on the site of Samaria.[24] In this case there is substantial archaeological evidence which can be brought into relation with this settlement. The round towers added to the existing wall of the acropolis are dated to the late fourth century; an outer circuit of walls, with square towers, perhaps belongs to the second century B.C.[25] It seems certain that this small fortified town on a hill-top is that of the Macedonian settlers and their descendants, to be distinguished from the Samaritans proper, who in the later fourth century had established their own temple on Mount Gerizim.[26]

The cults followed by the settlers are illustrated (if no more than that) by a finely cut inscription of the third century B.C. from Samaria with a dedication by Hegesander, Xenarchis, and their children to Sarapis and Isis.[27] But in many places we cannot be *certain* what social changes are implied by the appearance of cities with Macedonian place-names, like Beroea, Cyrrhus, or Gindarus in the north-east, or Pella or Dium in Jordan.[28] Excavations at Pella have revealed some evidence of the earlier Hellenistic period.[29] But Cyrrhus, for example, makes no appearance at all in our sources until 6,000 "Cyrrhestian" soldiers are recorded as mutinying against Antiochus III in 220.[30] It is reasonable to believe that it was a Macedonian settlement of the early period, like Dura-Europos on the Euphrates. But again, very little is known of the social character of Hellenistic Dura except the vital item that

24. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 160.

25. J. W. Crowfoot, K. M. Kenyon, and E. L. Sukenik, *Samaria-Sebaste* I: *The Buildings* (1942), 24–31.

26. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 61; see further text to n. 70 below.

27. J. W. Crowfoot, G. M. Crowfoot, and K. M. Kenyon, *Samaria-Sebaste* I: *The Objects* (London, 1957), 37, no. 13; illustrated in M. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land* (1972), 37.

28. For toponyms in Syria, see the illuminating survey by E. Frézouls, "La toponymie de l'Orient syrien et l'apport des éléments macédoniens," in *La toponymie antique: actes de colloque de Strassbourg 1975* (1978), 219–48.

29. R. H. Smith, "Preliminary Report of the 1981 Season of the Sydney/Wooster Joint Expedition to Pella," *ADAJ* 26 (1982): 323ff.

30. Polyb. 5, 50, 7–8; 57, 4; see E. Frézouls, "Recherches historiques et archéologiques sur la ville de Cyrrhus," *AAAS* 4–5 (1954–55): 89–128; E. Frézouls, "Cyrrhus et la Cyrrhestique jusqu'a la fin du Haut-Empire," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 164–97.

some at least of the land there was classified as *klēroi* (lots; *P. Dura* 15, second century B.C.). As a physical structure it was, like Samaria, a fortified site of moderate extent (the three longer sides measuring just under 1,000 metres each), sited on a plateau above the Euphrates, and later equipped with walls. Internally, it was set out in regular blocks on the well-known Hippodamian plan, with a central agora. It is uncertain which, if any, temples can be attributed to the initial Hellenistic phase. No evidence for a theatre or other public buildings of this period has been found.[31] It is natural to presume that we should envisage both Samaria and Dura as Macedonian military settlements, placed for strategic purposes in alien landscapes, and with modest pretensions to being the bearers of a wider Greek culture. In the case of many other foundations there is still less evidence. Beroea (Aleppo) is recorded as a foundation of Seleucus I (Appian, *Syr.* 57). Once again we have nothing to show whether the ancient city of Aleppo still existed at the moment of the settlement; but the street plan to this day reflects the rectangular axes which may well be those of the colony.[32]

The same problems persist if we look at places which subsequently gained Hellenistic dynastic names: Philadelphia (Amman) and Ptolemais (Acco) from Ptolemy Philadelphus (near here Strabo 16.2.27 [758], notes three placenames which may reflect Ptolemaic rule: "Sykaminōn polis," "Boukolōn polis," and "Krokodeilōn polis"). Epiphaneia (Hama) presumably gained its name from Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This was of course another ancient city, which, as Josephus records, the natives (*epichōrioi*) still called "Hama" (*Ant.* 1, 138). But, paradoxically, excavations on the site have seemed to suggest that it was unoccupied between its destruction by Sargon II in 720 and the beginning of Greek settlement in the second century B.C.[33] On the other hand, Sargon is recorded to have settled 6,300 Assyrians there, and there continue to be occasional mentions of Hama as a place in documents of the intervening period;[34] the archaeological evidence should not be interpreted on the *assumption* that the site was desolate after 720,[35] and imported Hellenistic

31. A. Perkins, *The Art of Dura-Europos* (1973), 10–16; see F. Millar, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule," in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse*, Historia-Einzelschrift 122 (1998), 473–92 (= chapter 16 in the present volume).

32. J. Sauvaget, *Alep: essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne des origines au milieu du XIX^e siècle* (1941), 40.

33. So E. Fugman, *Hama. Fouilles et recherches de la Fondation Carlsberg 1931–1938* II: *architecture des périodes pré-hellénistique* (1958), 269.

34. Fugman (n. 33), 264.

35. See esp. E. D. Francis and M. Vickers, "Greek Geometric Pottery at Hama and Its Implications for Near Eastern Chronology," *Levant* 17 (1985): 131ff.

pottery appears there before the reign of Antiochus IV.[36] The evidence for continuity of settlement is therefore ambivalent; and while the evidence for the Hellenistic city remains unpublished, it is impossible to say whether it would suggest the implantation of an organised settlement at a specific moment. But if Epiphaneia did receive an actual settlement of Greeks, there was certainly no such settlement in Jerusalem in the 170s, when the population briefly acquired the title "Antiocheis." The settlement on the Akra in Jerusalem in the 160s was another matter.

The provable extent of organised Macedonian or Greek settlement is thus limited to one area, north Syria. Other towns which acquired Greek names may well also have received settlements, but some certainly did not. If we consider the entire non-desert area west of the Euphrates, Greek colonial settlement must be regarded as a relatively limited phenomenon, largely restricted in time also, to the reign of Seleucus I. Whatever created the conditions for a large-scale transformation, fusion, or conflict, if anything did, it was not, except in northern Syria, a massive process of colonisation.

Was there none the less extensive private immigration, either for settlement on the land or for other purposes, such as trading in slaves? Here again we have to say that we do not know. We can easily illustrate, for instance, the presence in Syria of Ptolemaic soldiers from various parts of the Greek world; the inscription from Ras Ibn Hani on the coast eight kilometres north of Laodicea[37] which records some of these is the earliest Greek public inscription from northern Syria, dating to about the second half of the third century. Excavations on this site have shown that a fortified Greek town, whose name remains unknown, was established there in the same period, probably by the Ptolemies.[38] Greeks also entered the service of local dynasts: a papyrus from the Zenon archive shows us soldiers from Cnidus, Caunus, Macedon, Miletus, Athens, and Aspendus serving in 159 under Tobias in Ammonitis (*PCZ* 59003 = *CPJ* I, 1). In the second century we come across a Macedonian settled at Abae in Arabia and married to an Arabian wife (Diod. Sic. 32, 10, 2), or a *politeuma* of Caunians settled in Sidon (*OGIS* 592). No doubt we could accumulate further illustrations; but it would hardly be significant, since it would be more than surprising if there had been no Greek private settlement in this region. But it does have to be emphasised that there is no positive evi-

36. A. P. Christensen and C. F. Johansen, *Hama. Fouilles et recherches 1931–1938* III.2: *les potéries hellénistiques et les terres sigillées orientales* (1971), 1.

37. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Inscription grecque découverte à Ras Ibn Hani: stèle de mercénaires lagides sur la côte syrienne," *Syria* 55 (1978): 313–25.

38. P. Leriche, "La fouille de la ville hellénistique d'Ibn Hani: bilan provisoire 1981," in M. Yon, ed., *Archéologie au Levant: recueil à la mémoire de Roger Saidah* (1982), 271ff.

dence to suggest that there was private immigration on a scale which would by itself have brought profound changes in culture, social relations, or the economy.

If we go back to the major cities of the Syrian tetrapolis, there is certainly adequate evidence to illustrate their character as Greek cities in the Hellenistic period. It should be stressed that in the absence of large-scale documentary evidence we still depend quite significantly on passing items of narrative material, like the papyrus report (the Gurob papyrus) from the Ptolemaic side, of Ptolemy III's invasion of Syria in the 240s.[39] It records the priests, *archontes* (annual magistrates), and the other citizens of Seleucia, with the *hēgemones* (officers of the Seleucid garrison) and soldiers, coming down to greet the invading forces. A similar scene is said to have followed at Antioch, with a ceremonial greeting before the city by "satraps and other *hēgemones*, and soldiers and *synarchiai* [magistrates] and all the *neaniskoi* [youth] from the gymnasium," and the rest of the population, bearing cult images. Seleucia does not reappear in our evidence until we come to Polybius book 5, and the narrative of its recapture by Antiochus III in 219; it turns out to be a place of modest size, with some 6,000 "free men" (which may mean citizens only, or all non-slave male inhabitants); perhaps therefore some 30,000 persons in all (5, 61, 1). These cities produce nothing like the vast harvest of monumental Greek inscriptions which characterise (say) Delphi, Delos, or some of the Greek cities of western Asia Minor in this period. It is true that at Antioch, Seleucia, and Laodicea subsequent occupation greatly limits the possibilities of excavation; there is some scanty evidence on early Hellenistic Laodicea.[40] But it should still not be assumed that the social conditions which elsewhere led to the large production of public inscriptions necessarily applied in Syria in the same way. Public inscriptions from Seleucia in Pieria do reveal, for instance, the vote of a statue for the Seleucid *epistatēs* (overseer) of the city in 186 B.C.;[41] or a letter of Antiochus VIII or IX, of 109 B.C., confirming the freedom of the city.[42] There is no substantial corpus of the public inscriptions of Seleucia; excavation of the relevant public buildings, when identified, might of course reveal them. From Laodicea the only known public decision recorded on stone from the Hellenistic period is the *gnōmē* (proposal)

39. *FGrHist*. 160; see translation in M. M. Austin, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation* (1981), no. 220.

40. See R. A. Stucky, *Ras Shamra—Leukos Limen: Die nach-ugaritische Besiedlung von Ras Shamra* (1983), 173–74.

41. C. B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Age* (New Haven, 1934, repr. 1966), no. 45 = *IGLS* 111.1, 1184.

42. *OGIS* 257; Welles (n. 41), nos. 71–72.

of Asclepiades and the *archontes*, approved by the *peliganes* (the councillors, a Macedonian word) in 174 B.C. (*IGLS* IV, 1261), concerning the sanctuary of Isis and Sarapis. From Antioch and Apamea there are no public decrees at all surviving from the Hellenistic period; though one inscription from Antioch shows *theōroi* (sacred delegates) honouring an *agōnothetēs* (director of an *agōn*, i.e., public games) from Seleucia in 198/7 B.C.;[43] and one from Daphne shows Antiochus III appointing a priest there.[44] Passing literary references indicate at least the existence of gymnasia at Laodicea (Appian, *Syr.* 46) and at Daphne near Antioch (Polyb. 30, 26, 1) and, for example, of a hippodrome near Seleucia (Polyb. 5, 47, 1). Posidonius' remarks on the luxury of life in Syria (*Ath.* 210e–f = 527e–f) imply that gymnasia were common. None of these cities, however, has revealed any trace of a theatre that can be firmly dated to this period. It is surely, I think, a revealing fact that there is no certain archaeological evidence for a theatre of the Hellenistic period anywhere in the Syrian region. Given the relative indestructability of theatres built against hillsides, as Hellenistic theatres normally were (e.g., those of Priene or Delos), this is one case where negative evidence may be suggestive.[45]

Outside the places which we know to have been royal foundations, or to have acquired Greek names, we do have some evidence, from various periods, of the spread of a recognisably Greek way of life. A site called Ayin Dara, north-east of Aleppo, for instance, shows traces of occupation in the Persian period and then a substantial urban area with walls from the Hellenistic period, with pottery and coins of the second and first centuries B.C.[46] This site, whose Greek name, if it had one, is unknown, is a reminder of just how much of the evidence of Hellenistic Syria may simply be lost. For contrast we have Tel Anafa in northern Galilee, whose heated bath-house of the later second century B.C. is the earliest known from the Near East;[47] and the well-known site of Marisa in Idumaean, a small urban settlement of six acres, built in the third or early second centuries B.C., and enclosed by a fortification wall. Greek was in use there, as shown by some execration texts in Greek,

43. C. H. Kraeling, "A New Greek Inscription from Antioch on the Orontes," *AJA* 68 (1964): 178ff. (and pl. 60); *BE* 1965, 436.

44. Welles (n. 41), no. 44.

45. So E. Frézouls, "Recherches sur les théatres de l'Orient syrien," *Syria* 36 (1959): 202–27; but see M. A. R. Colledge, "Greek and Non-Greek Interaction in the Art and Architecture of the Hellenistic East," in A. Kuhrt and S. M. Sherwin-White, eds., *Hellenism in the East* (1987), 151.

46. E. Seirafi and A. Kirichian, "Recherches archéologiques à Ayin Dara au N-O d'Alep," *AAAS* 15.2 (1965): 3–20.

47. S. Herbert, "Tel Anafa: The 1981 Season," *Muse* 15 (1981): 23ff.

and the inscriptions on the well-known painted tombs. But the house-types are non-Greek and at least some of the inhabitants identified themselves in Greek as "Sidonians in Marisa."[48] The mixed culture of this area in the third century B.C. is vividly illustrated by a group of ostraca from Khirbet el-Kōm, four in Aramaic, one in Greek, and one Greek-Aramaic bilingual; the latter records the borrowing of thirty-two ZUZN by Niceratus from one Qusyada'/Kosides, described (in both texts) by the Greek word *kapēlos*, "trader."[49] This text, probably of 277 B.C., thus reveals *kapēlos* as a loan-word in a dialect of Aramaic. These ostraca are closely paralleled by an Aramaic ostracon of the third century from Jerusalem, also containing what seem to be two Greek loan-words.[50]

The ostracon is given the date 277 on the supposition that the "sixth year" referred to in it is that of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Most of the evidence which illustrates Greek economic activity in Syria comes from the Ptolemaic phase of control. All we have is fragments, occasionally illuminating. Some cities, as we saw, gained dynastic names, Akko becoming "Ptolemais," and Rabbat-Amman "Philadelphia." Scythopolis and Philoteria in Galilee must also have gained their Greek names in the Ptolemaic period. Our main evidence comes from the Zenon papyri, discussed by Tcherikover.[51] These papyri, of course, owe their survival to the particular conditions of Egypt, and thus cast a sidelight on Syria somewhat comparable to that shed by the Aramaic documents from Egypt of the Achaemenid period (text to note 7 above). But while the relevant climatic and soil conditions, allowing the survival of perishable writing materials, very rarely apply in the Near East, they are not wholly unknown, as the documents from the Judaean Desert show.

The first thing that the Zenon papyri clearly illustrate is the slave trade. Among the immigrant Greek *klērouchoi* (colonists) serving at Birtha in Ammonitis under Tobias, mentioned earlier (*PCZ* 59003 = *CPJ* I, 1), one sells a slave girl named Sphragis, apparently from Babylon or Sidon, to another, who then sells her to Zenon. In Marisa Zenon also bought some slaves (*sōmata*), two of whom escaped and had to be searched for (59015). One Menecles appears as having transported some slaves and other merchandise (*phorta*) from Gaza to Tyre, and as intending to tranship them without paying the ex-

48. *OGIS* 593; G. Horowitz, "Town Planning in Hellenistic Marisa: Reappraisal of the Excavations after Eighty Years," *PEQ* 112 (1980): 93–111.

49. L. T. Geraty, "The Khirbet el-Kōm Bilingual Ostracon," *BASOR* 220 (1975): 55–61.

50. F. M. Cross, "An Aramaic Ostracon of the Third Century B.C. from Jerusalem," *Eretz-Israel* 15 (1981): 67ff.

51. V. Tcherikover, "Palestine under the Ptolemies (a Contribution to the Study of the Zenon Papyri)," *Mizraim* 4–5 (1937): 9–90.

port tax or having an export permit (*exagōgē tōn sōmatōn*) (*PCZ* 59093). Tobias also sends to Apollonius a group of four slaves as a gift, two described as circumcised and two not (*PCZ* 59076 = *CPJ* I, 5). There is no obvious reason in the text for regarding either of the circumcised men as Jewish; if they were not, then this is evidence for the continuation of the custom of circumcision among the Syrians generally in the Hellenistic period.

Much more informative for the continuity of a non-Greek culture is a papyrus letter of 156 B.C. from Egypt mentioning a slave who was "by race a Syrian from Bambyce" who was "tattooed on the right wrist with two barbarian letters."[52] The letters can only have been Aramaic ones; Bambyce is Hierapolis, an important centre of a non-Greek culture, on which see further below. Lucian, *On the Syrian Goddess*, written in the second century A.D., which is about the goddess Astarte of Hierapolis, records (59) that the Syrian adherents of the cult were tattooed on the neck or wrist—"and thence all *Assyrioi* bear tattoos."

To come back to the economic impact of Greek rule, slavery and the slave trade were clearly a feature of it; but whether this was a *novelty* remains unclear. The most striking reflection of slavery in Hellenistic Syria remains the well-known edict of Ptolemy II Philadelphus dating to April 260, which surely can be taken to illustrate a causal connection between foreign domination and slavery:[53] "If any of those in Syria or Phoenicia have bought a *sōma laikon eleutheron* [free native]," or have acquired one in any other way, they are required to prove that they were slaves at the time of acquisition. Those bought at royal auctions, however, are legally owned even if they claim to be free. Moreover soldiers or others who are settled (*katoikountōn*) who are living with *gunaikes laikai* (native wives) need not declare them as slaves. In the future it will be forbidden to acquire possession of *sōmata laika eleuthera* except those sold up by the superintendent of the revenues of Syria and Phoenicia. Whatever the legal definitions involved, the order clearly reflects a notion of the particular liability of the free "native" population of south Syria to slavery; in particular it is significant that the document has to make clear that the "native" wives of Ptolemaic soldiers and settlers do *not* have to be categorised as slaves. Strikingly, in this case, the king is taking steps to limit the circumstances under which individuals found themselves regarded as slaves.

52. See G. Vaggi, "Siria e Siri nei documenti dell'Egitto greco-romano," *Aegyptus* 17 (1937): 29–51, on 34–35.

53. M.-T. Lenger, *Corpus des ordonnances des Ptolémées*[2] (Brussels, 1980), no. 22; Austin (n. 39), no. 275.

As was hinted earlier, any notions of what social, economic, cultural, or social status is implied by the expression *sōmata laika eleuthera* must remain hypothetical. Even if we disregard acute regional variations (see below), it is no use pretending that we have any idea of the typical forms of property relations in the Syrian area either before or after Alexander's conquest. We can of course see *examples* of various different things, for instance, the exploitation of private landed property in the Ptolemaic period in Palestine, perfectly exemplified in a papyrus from the Zenon archive (*P. Lond.* 1948) of 257 B.C. An agent, Glaucias, is writing to Apollonius about his enormous vineyard at Bethaneth, which was somewhere in Galilee: "On arrival at Bethaneth I took Melas with me and inspected the plants and everything else. The estate seems to me to be satisfactorily cultivated, and he said the vines numbered 80,000. He has also constructed a well, and satisfactory living quarters. He gave me a taste of the wine, and I was unable to distinguish whether it was Chian or local. So your affairs are prospering and fortune is favouring you all along the line." This does on the face of it seem to be an example of the deliberate increase of productive capacity of a sort which, for Ptolemaic Egypt generally, Alan Samuel sought to deny.[54] There is, however, no indication of how the estate was worked, whether by slave labour, free hired labour, or dependent villagers. The question of dependent, but non-slave, agricultural labour in the Hellenistic world has attracted an enormous amount of attention. But the evidence comes almost entirely from Seleucid land grants or sales in Asia Minor; moreover, the real social and economic relations alluded to in these inscriptions remain extremely obscure.[55] It is also from Asia Minor, and entirely from Strabo's *Geography*, that we have almost all the available descriptions of large communities of *hierodouloi* (sacred slaves) attached to temples.[56] Comparable evidence is hardly available from Syria. There are, I think, just three items. First is the mutilated inscription from Hephzibah near Scythopolis (Bethshean) first published by Landau 1966 and re-edited by Fischer 1979.[57] The dossier contains petitions to Antiochus III from Ptolemaeus, described as *stratēgos* (general) and *archiereus* (high priest),

54. A. E. Samuel, *From Athens to Alexandria: Hellenism and Social Goals in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Louvain, 1983).

55. Welles (n. 41), nos. 10–13, 18–20, 62; cf. P. Briant, "Remarques sur 'laoi' et esclaves ruraux en Asie Mineure hellénistique," in *Rois, tributs et paysans* (n. 17), 95–135 (originally published in *Actes du colloque 1971 sur l'esclavage* [1973]: 93–133).

56. K. W. Welwei, "Abhängige Landbevölkerung auf 'Tempelterritorien' im hellenistischen Kleinasien und Syrien," *Ancient Society* 10 (1979): 97–118; P. Debord, *Aspects sociaux et économiques de la vie religieuse dans l'Anatolie gréco-romaine* (Leiden, 1982), 76ff.

57. Cf. J. M. Bertrand, "Sur l'inscription d'Hefzibah," *ZPE* 46 (1982): 167–74.

and the king's replies, concerning properties owned by Ptolemaeus. The context is immediately after the Seleucid conquest in 200. All that is clear is that the dossier speaks of *kōmai* (villages) "of" Ptolemaeus, and that as owner he is concerned to protect the people (*laoi*) in his villages from official exactions and the quartering of troops (*epistathmeia*). One phrase may imply that some *kōmai* had been inherited by him, and others added by the king's command. We can accept that the document embodies the notion of owning villages and (in some sense) of owning or being responsible for the people who inhabit them.

Further north, from the hills inland from Aradus, we have the famous inscription of the temple of Baetocaece.[58] In response to a report about the *energeia* (power) of the god Zeus of Baetocaece, King Antiochus—which one is uncertain[59]—announces his decision to grant to the god the village of Baetocaece, which a certain Demetrius formerly "had" (*eschen*), so that its revenue (*prosodos*) may be spent on the sacrifice, and any other steps taken for the improvement of the shrine by the priest appointed by the god. There is to be a monthly tax-free fair, the sanctuary is to have the right of asylum, and the village is on no account to be subject to billetting.

It is clear that the cult of Zeus of Baetocaece already existed. The village had, up to the moment of the king's grant of it to the temple, been in private possession. This may mean no more than that there had previously been a (revocable) grant of it to a private person by an earlier king; that is to say that the village belonged in the category of *chōra basilikē*, royal land.[60] No such legal prescription is actually stated in the document, and it is clear from the king's decision that some representation had been made to him about the "power" (*energeia*) of the god. It is, therefore, equally possible that he is approving the transfer to the sanctuary of land which had previously been in full private ownership. Exactly what is meant for the status of the inhabitants is uncertain. In inscribing this document in the 250s A.D., and also a little earlier, in the 220s (*IGLS* VII 4031), they describe themselves as *katochoi* (subjects) of the god.

The city of Aradus is not involved in this initial transaction, though it was later, under Augustus. Are we then dealing with royal land (*chōra basilikē*) either in the sense of an individual royal property or in the wider sense, com-

58. *IGLS* VII, 4028; Austin (n. 39), no. 178.

59. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes, 48: Arados et Baetocaece," *Syria* 28 (1951): 191–206; K. J. Rigsby, "Seleucid Notes," *TAPhA* 110 (1980): 233–54; B. Baroni, "I terreni e i privilegi del tempio di Zeus a Baitokaike (*IGLS* VII 4028)," in B. Virgilio, ed., *Studi ellenistici* I (1984), 135–67.

60. So Baroni (n. 59).

monly imagined in modern books, that *all* the land outside city territories was "royal," that is, in some sense owned and exploited by the king, and at his disposition? In my view this notion goes far beyond what our evidence shows. As what is said below will illustrate, it is very questionable whether this concept has any reflection in the real-life social and economic relations which our sources attest. There were many non-city areas where no direct control was, or could be, exercised by any king.

Where we do find land in royal possession, and then being assigned for cult purposes, is in the remarkable documents from Commagene in which Antiochus I (c. 69/38 B.C.) proclaims his institution of a cult for various gods, for his deceased father, Mithridates Callinicus, and for himself.[61] Among the other provisions he states that he has dedicated a group of *mousikoi* who are to learn the arts necessary for performing at the cult festivals, and to be succeeded in the same skills by their sons, daughters, and all their descendants. They are described as *hierodouloi* (sacred slaves), and are to maintain this hereditary role forever. It is not clear, however, whether these are or are not the same as the inhabitants of the *kōmai* (villages) which, in the Nemrud Dagh text, he says he had dedicated to the gods, or (in the text from Arsamea in the Nymphaios) of the land *ek basilikōs ktēseōs* (in royal possession) which he has dedicated with its revenues, to be looked after by the priests. But at least we confront here an unambiguous reference to specific royal properties, and also, once again, a category of non-free persons (*hierodouloi*) which does not descend from a remote past but is being created in the first century B.C.

Not far away, and at about the same time, Cicero fought his miserable little campaign against the free Cilicians of the Amanus, whose town, Pindenissum, was high up, well fortified, and inhabited by people who had never yielded obedience to the (Seleucid) kings (*fam.* 15, 4, 10). It took him a siege of fifty-six days to capture it. The mountainous or marginal areas of the Syrian region were covered with fortified villages, whose inhabitants, as far as we can see, were integrated in no system of property relations imposed from outside and did not belong in any functional sense to any state. Internally, of course, they had their own systems of social stratification. We see this best in one vivid report which relates to two village communities in Moab in about 160 B.C. A people called the "sons of Jamri" were celebrating the wedding of the daughter of one of the notables (*megistanes*) of Canaan, conducting the bride in a great procession laden with possessions. From the

61. H. Waldmann, *Die kommagenischen Kultreformen unter König Mithridates I Kallinikos und seinem Sohne Antiochos I* (1973); J. Wagner and G. Petzl, "Eine neue Temenos-Stele des Königs Antiochos I von Kommagene," *ZPE* 20 (1976): 201–23.

opposite direction the bridegroom with his friends and brothers was on his way to meet the bride, accompanied by musicians playing tambourines, and an armed escort. At that point the scene stops; for Jonathan and Simon Maccabaeus with their followers leap up from ambush, slaughter as many as they can, put the rest to flight, and take all their possessions (1 Macc. 9:37–42).

The two books of Maccabees, especially the first, give us the best—and more or less contemporary—picture which we have of social formations and settlement patterns in the southern part of the Syrian region in the second century; they would deserve further investigation, directed to the hints which they provide as to non-Jewish social structures in this period. The Maccabean wars stretched from the cities of the Philistine coast, like Azotus with its temple of the Philistine god, Dagon ("Bethdagon," 1 Macc. 10:83–84), to the fortified villages (*ochuromata*) of Idumaea (2 Macc. 10:15) or Transjordan (1 Macc. 5:6–9). In 1 Macc. 5:26–27 a whole string of places across the Jordan, all of which have retained analogous Arabic names until modern times—"Bosora," "Bosor," "Alema," "Chaspho," "Maked," "Karnaim"—are described as large, fortified *poleis*. These too will have been fortified villages; it is worth noting that the author of 1 Maccabees has no notion that term *polis* ought to be restricted to self-governing cities formally recognised as such; he uses it for instance of Modein (2:15), the village from which the Maccabees came.[62] Similarly, Polybius uses the word *polis* of Atabyrion, a settlement on Mount Tabor (5, 70, 7).

The narratives of Maccabees also illustrate the very close geographical conjunction between different social or economic groupings which characterised this area, since the operations bring the Jewish forces into repeated contact not only with cities and with fortified villages, but with groups described as "Arabs," following a nomadic, or at any rate non-sedentary, way of life. Even on the coastal strip near Jaffa, Judas Maccabaeus is attacked by no less than 5,000 Arabs with 500 horsemen, described as *nomades*. When defeated, they offer cattle as a pledge of friendship and retire to their tents (*skēnai*; 2 Macc. 12:10–12). The social pattern of an intermingling and mutual dependence, balanced by recurrent hostilities, between various gradations of settled, pastoral, and truly nomadic communities using camels, is of course well known, and nowhere better described than by Donner on the early Islamic conquests.[63] It is worth noting that Diodorus, concluding his account of the Nabataeans, gives a succinct account of the social relations involved

62. But see R. J. van der Spek, "The Babylonian City," in Kuhrt and Sherwin-White (n. 45), 58.

63. F. M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquest* (1981).

(19, 94, 10): "There are also other tribes of Arabs, of whom some even cultivate the soil, intermingled with the tax-paying peoples, and [who] share the customs of the Syrians, except that they dwell in tents."

I return below to the question of the movement of Arab peoples into Syria and their settlement there, a subject discussed in an interesting way by Dussaud.[64] For the moment note Diodorus' contrast between Arabs living in tents and those in settled populations who can be made to pay taxes. In many parts of the Syrian region, in the mountains and on the fringes of the desert above all, the Seleucid (or Ptolemaic) state either never had or only occasionally had any effective presence as the Achaemenids before them, who, however, maintained a contractual relationship with them.[65]

Most of what I have been saying so far has been designed to suggest how limited, variable, and erratic the Greek presence in the different parts of the Syrian region was in the Hellenistic period, at any rate so far as our present evidence shows. I now wish to look at the other side, and ask what if anything we know of the non-Greek culture of the area, or of essentially non-Greek communities within it. The Phoenician cities of the coast preserved their historical identity and culture, while evolving, by steps which we cannot really trace, into Greek cities.[66] A similar evolution seems to have taken place in the ancient Philistine cities further south, Azotus, Ascalon, and Gaza.[67] As with many other places in the Near East, their non-Greek, or not wholly Greek, identity is expressed most clearly in dedications made on Delos. Perhaps the most striking example is the well-known dedication by a man from Ascalon: "To Zeus Ourios and Astarte Palestine and Aphrodite Ourania, the listening gods, Damon son of Demetrios, of Askalon, having been saved from pirates, [offers his] prayer. It is not permitted to introduce [here] a goat, pig, or cow."[68] The notion that these, or any other existing communities, could be made into Greek cities purely by the issue of some sort of charter or the granting of a Greek constitution, without either a settlement or building operations, still seems to me to need further examination. It is more in accordance with the evidence to see these coastal cities as places which had

64. R. Dussaud, *La pénétration des Arabes en Syrie avant l'Islam* (Paris, 1955); see also P. Briant, *Etat et pasteurs au Moyen-Orient ancien* (1982), chap. 3 (an important study); and I. Shahid, *Rome and the Arabs* (1984).

65. Briant (n. 64), 170ff.

66. Millar (n. 5).

67. K. Rappaport, "Gaza and Ascalon in the Persian and Hellenistic Periods in Relation to Their Coins," *IEJ* 20 (1970): 75ff.; Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 98–110.

68. *ID* no. 2305; P. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l'epoque hellénistique et à l'epoque impériale* (1970), 346–47.

been in close contact with the Greek world before Alexander, and where, after the conquest, a continued process of Hellenisation took place gradually against a background of cultural continuity.[69] But we should not think of the non-Greek elements as being static features of a world in which cultural change came only from the Greek side. For instance, some nine kilometres from Acco/Ptolemais a Greek inscription of probably the second century B.C. shows a man with a Greek name dedicating an altar to Hadad and Atargatis, "the listening gods."[70] Rather than being an example of the continuity of local non-Greek cults, this inscription is the earliest attestation of these deities on the Phoenician coast.

A much greater problem is presented by those inland cities or communities which are not known to have received any formal Greek colony or settlement. With Jerusalem and Judaea the essential features of cultural and religious contact and conflict are well known: a significant level of Hellenisation, met by a conscious and violent reaction and reassertion of "national" tradition. The Samaritans too retained and reasserted their "Israelite" identity. This fact is perfectly illustrated by two dedications of the middle and late second century from Delos in Greek put up by "The Israelites on Delos who pay their tithes to holy Argarizein [Mount Gerizim]."[71]

By contrast, if we think for instance of Damascus, virtually nothing is known of its character as a city or community at the moment of the Macedonian conquest except the bare fact of its existence. Nor has any significant evidence about it through the Hellenistic period survived, beyond some coins of the second and first centuries B.C. with the legend *Damaskēnon* (of the people of Damascus) and passing mentions of it as an object of successive dynastic conflicts.[72] The occasional documents of persons from Damascus abroad in the Hellenistic world are not very informative, though they do illustrate the adoption of Greek nomenclature. It is not surprising that Semitic names might also be retained, for instance "Martha, Damascēnē [a Damascene]," on a late second-century inscription from Delos (*ID* nos. 2286–87).

No real insight into the internal life of Damascus can be attained until the middle of the first century, when we come to Nicolaus' account of his father Antipater, who was presumably born around the beginning of the century

69. See Colledge (n. 45), 137.

70. M. Avi-Yonah, "Syrian Gods at Ptolemais-Accho," *IEJ* 9 (1959): 1–12.

71. P. Bruneau, " 'Les Israélites de Délos' et la juiverie délienne," *BCH* 106 (1982): 465–504.

72. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 127–30.

and was a skilled orator (in Greek, as is clearly implied), who filled all the offices (*archai*) in the city and represented it before the various dynasts who ruled in the surrounding area (*FGrHist*. 90 F 131). In the chaotic conditions of fluctuating empires and local tyrannies which marked the history of Syria in the middle of the century,[73] this will have been an essential function. The education and culture to which Nicolaus laid claim (*FGrHist*. 90 F 132) was wholly Greek, and nothing in the extensive fragments of his works suggests any influence from a different historical or cultural tradition. In this he offers an obvious and striking contrast to Josephus, who was to make so much use of him as a source.[74]

A combination of different cultural traditions is certainly expressed in the monuments and inscriptions of one local dynasty which emerged in northern Syria in the second century, the royal house of Commagene.[75] But if what we are interested in is a local "mixed" culture, Commagene is not a true exception, for everything that we can observe there is, firstly, a royal invention; and, secondly, though the kings consciously draw on two traditions, they do so in relation to Greek and *Persian* elements, not Syrian or Aramaic ones: Greek gods and Ahuramazda; royal descent from Persia and Macedon; Persian dress to be worn at festivals.[76] It was natural, in creating a new royal ideology, to look to the two major monarchies of the Achaemenids and the Seleucids. But there is still a contrast, for instance, with the contemporary coinage of the Hasmoneans in Judaea, which incorporates Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic elements.[77]

So far as I can find, a real continuity is traceable in just one place outside Phoenicia and Judaea, namely Bambyce, also called in Aramaic/Syriac Manbog, and soon to be called in Greek Hierapolis, some miles west of the Euphrates. This is the place from which came the slave in Egypt with his wrist tattooed in "barbarian letters" (text to n. 52 above). It may be worth putting together what we know of this place, somewhat increased since Goossens' book of 1943. The location of Bambyce, not far from the Euphrates and northern Mesopotamia, may well be significant. Since we know even less of the culture of northern Mesopotamia in the Hellenistic period than we do of the various areas of Syria itself, we can only speculate about how far the

73. See esp. Rey-Coquais (n. 37).

74. See esp. T. Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society* (1983).

75. For the dynasty, see R. D. Sullivan, "The Dynasty of Emesa," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 198–219; J. Wagner, "Dynastie und Herrscherkult in Kommagene: Forschungsgeschichte und neuere Funde," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 33 (1983): 177ff.

76. Waldmann (n. 61).

77. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 602ff.

two areas shared a common cultural history. But it is at least clear that a remarkable variety of non-Greek influences steadily gained ascendancy, from the first century B.C. onwards, in the Macedonian colony of Dura-Europos; that Syriac script is first attested, in the very early first century A.D., on the Euphrates;[78] and that another Macedonian colony, not far across the Euphrates, Edessa, was to be the focus of Syriac culture.[79] For the wider cultural contacts around the Fertile Crescent, it is suggestive that Lucian's account of the "Syrian Goddess" of Hierapolis/Bambyce records (*dea Syr.* 10) that offerings came there not only from various regions west of the Euphrates but also from Babylonia.

At the time of Alexander's conquest Bambyce was producing coins with Aramaic legends, with the names of " 'Abdhadad" (meaning "servant of [the god] Hadad"), or " 'Abyaty," or (still in Aramaic letters) " 'Alksandr [Alexandros]." One has a longer legend " 'Abdhadad, priest of Manbog, who(?) resembles Hadaran his lord."[80] The reverse of this same coin shows a priest, presumably 'Abdhadad himself, standing before an altar wearing a long tunic and tall conical hat. Other coins represent Atargatis of Bambyce, the "Syrian goddess," and one of these has, in Greek, the letters *ΣΕ*, presumably "Seleukos." According to Lucian the temple which stood there in his time had been rebuilt by Stratonice, the wife of Seleucus I (*dea Syr.* 17).

In the next century, inscriptions of 128/7 B.C. onwards record men from this place, described as a *polis* with the name Hierapolis (e.g., *ID* no. 2226), acting as priests of Hadad and Atargatis at Delos, where a whole range of Syrian cults are represented explicitly in a way which is hardly attested in the Hellenistic period in Syria itself.[81] Probably a little earlier, an inscription from Larisa in Thessaly reveals a man called Antipater, a "Hierapolitan of Seleucis," described as "a Chaldaean astronomer," evidently resident over a long period in Thessaly. The description of him as a "Chaldaean," later repeated by Vitruvius,[82] would naturally suggest either that Hierapolitans were felt to

78. J. Pirenne, "Aux origines de la graphie syriaque," *Syria* 40 (1963): 101–37; H. J. W. Drijvers, *Old Syriac (Edessean) Inscriptions* (1972).

79. J. B. Segal, *Edessa: The Blessed City* (1970); H. J. W. Drijvers, "Hatra, Palmyra, und Edessa: Die Städte der syrisch-mesopotamischen Wüste in politischer, kulturgeschichtlicher und religionsgeschichtlicher Bedeutung," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 799–906.

80. In general, see H. Seyrig, "Le monnayage de Hiérapolis de Syrie à l'époque d'Alexandre," *RN* 13 (1971): 1–21, who recalls the image in Ecclesiasticus 50, of the high priest Simon as he emerged before the people from within the Temple; but, as Seyrig recognises, the reading and interpretation are not certain.

81. Bruneau (n. 68), 466ff.

82. G. W. Bowersock, "Antipater Chaldaeus," *CQ* 33 (1983): 491.

be in some way associated with Babylonia, or that his astronomical learning was acquired there, or both.

In the first century B.C. the wealth of the temple was evidently well known, and in 54 B.C. Crassus removed treasures from it (Plutarch, *Crassus* 17). Under the Roman Empire one of the few inscriptions from the site (*IGLS* I nos. 232–33) shows that the place had a *boulē* and *dēmos* (council and people) in the normal way (no. 233). But the most striking of all the evidence is the relief, in two halves found fifty years apart and joining perfectly, showing a priest in a long tunic and conical hat surmounted by a crescent.[83] A Greek inscription records that this is a statue of Alexander, "the incomparable high priest," put up by his friend Achacus, who offered libations and prayed to the gods to preserve his *patris* (homeland) in *eunomia* (good order). The statue dates to the second century A.D., the time when Lucian describes the cult of the goddess and lists the vestments of the various priests—the others in white robes and pointed hats, the high priest in purple robes and a tiara (which is visible in the relief, round the bottom of his tall hat). In this case there is enough evidence to show a non-Greek cult which was already in existence before the Hellenistic period, and continued in a closely similar form into the Roman Empire. Very early on in the Hellenistic period it seems to have gained royal patronage; in the next century its cult is on show in Delos; under the Roman Empire it is a curiosity and tourist attraction, and a suitable subject for Lucian's parody of Herodotus.[84]

Outside Phoenicia and Judaea there is nowhere else in Seleucid Syria of which we can say the same. Those few non-Greek, or mixed Greek and non-Greek, cultures which our evidence at present does allow us to observe either came from outside the area of Seleucid control or are creations of the very late Hellenistic and the Roman period, or both. By contrast with the dearth of Aramaic inscriptions of the Achaemenid, Hellenistic, and Roman periods from Syria, inscriptions in the various pre-Islamic Semitic scripts are known in large numbers and cover a considerable range in space and time.[85] Firstly, Thamudic inscriptions begin in north-west Arabia around 400 B.C. and continue until the third or fourth century A.D. The sub-category of them known as "Safaitic," named from the volcanic region called the Safa, south-east of Damascus, was in use from the second century A.D. to just before the rise of

83. R. A. Stucky, "Prêtres Syriens II: Hiérapolis," *Syria* 53 (1976): 127–40.

84. See now, for all these questions, J. L. Lightfoot, *Lucan, On the Syrian Goddess* (2003).

85. H. P. Roschinski, "Sprachen, Schriften und Inschriften in Nordwestarabien," *BJ* 180 (1980): 151ff.; J. Teixidor, "L'hellénisme et les 'Barbares': l'exemple syrien," in *Le temps de la réflexion* (1981), 257–74.

Islam; scattered examples have been found as far away as Dura-Europos and Hama. Secondly, the Nabataeans, whom our classical sources regard as Arabs, could already write in "Syrian letters" when Antigonus made his unsuccessful campaign against them in 312 B.C. (Diod. Sic. 19, 96, 1). Nabataean inscriptions, of which some 4,000 are known, begin in the first half of the second century B.C., and continue until the fourth century A.D.[86] The northward spread of the inscriptions mirrors the spread of Nabataean control, which for a period in the first century B.C., and possibly again in the first century A.D., included Damascus. Thirdly, as regards the parallel case of the Palmyrenes, there is evidence of continuous occupation from the third millennium onwards on the tell where the temple of Bēl stood, and a mud-brick temple may have been constructed there in the early Hellenistic period. But a tomb of the mid-second century B.C. seems to be the earliest datable Hellenistic structure on the site.[87] In the middle of the first century B.C. we find both the earliest Palmyrene inscriptions and the earliest evidence of monumental building.[88] Both of these cases, Nabataea and Palmyra, can be argued to be examples of the sedentarisation of Arab, or at least nomadic, peoples, and certainly involved the construction of new urban centres exhibiting highly distinctive local varieties of Greek architecture. Fourthly, a settled population of mixed Greek and non-Greek culture, with buildings and inscriptions, also emerges in the same period in the Hauran (Djebel Druze), south-east of Damascus. The earliest known monument there is the temple of Balshamen at Si'a, dated by a bilingual Greek/Nabataean inscription to 33/2 B.C.[89]

It would be absurd to pretend that we can in any way *explain* these closely parallel developments. All I wish to underline is that we can see the visible manifestations of a number of mixed cultures emerging first outside the areas of Seleucid, or Roman, control, and then spreading inwards. Or so it seems; at Baalbek/Heliopolis, a place which we would naturally think of as distinctively Syrian, there is no certain archaeological evidence from before the early Roman imperial period. Von Gerkan did however argue that under the major temple of the mid-first century A.D. there were the foundations of

86. J. Starcky, "Pétra et la Nabatène," *SDB* 7 (1966), 886–1017; G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (1983).

87. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes, 89: les dieux armés et les Arabes en Syrie," *Syria* 47 (1970): 77–100; M. A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (1976); R. Fellmann, *Le sanctuaire de Balshamin à Palmyre* V: *Die Grabanlage* (1970); E. Will, "Le développement urbain de Palmyre: temoignages épigraphiques anciens et nouveaux," *Syria* 60 (1983): 69–81.

88. Drijvers (n. 78).

89. J.-M. Dentzer and J. Dentzer, "Les fouilles de Si' et la phase hellénistique en Syrie du sud," *CRAI* (1981): 78–102.

a late Hellenistic temple of different design.[90] Emesa, further north up the Orontes valley, was also of course, at least by the second and third centuries, the site of the conspicuously non-Greek cult of Elagabal, whose cult object was an aniconic black stone. The place is not known to have existed until the first century B.C., when there appeared the local dynasty of Sampsigeramus and his son Iamblichus,[91] the "tribal leaders" (*phylarchoi*) of the people (*ethnos*) of the Emiseni, as Strabo calls them (16, 2, 10 [753]), saying that they ruled nearby Arethusa (a settlement of Seleucus I, Appian, *Syr.* 57). These dynasts too were characterised by contemporaries as "Arabs" (Cicero, *fam.* 15, 1, 2: "Iamblichus, phylarchus Arabum [tribal leader of the Arabs]"), and the first part of Sampsigeramus' name is based on the Semitic word *shemesh*, the sun. On Seyrig's view, the sun cult in Syria is typically of Arab origin.[92] But, just to confuse our conception of the background, the main cult of Emesa in this period does not itself seem to have been a sun cult. What seems to be the earliest documentary attestation of the name "Elagabal" as a divine name offers a new etymology for the word, namely "god mountain." This is an inscription in Palmyrene lettering of the first century A.D., found some 80 kilometres south-east of Emesa and 100 kilometres south-west of Palmyra, and naming, along with the Arab deity Arṣu, another deity called " 'Ilh' gbl," that is (perhaps), "Elaha Gabal"—"god mountain"—represented as an eagle with outstretched wings standing on a rock.[93] Then, to add a further confusing element, when we come to Herodian's famous description of the cult of Elagabal (5, 3, 2–6), he characterises it as "Phoenician"; just as Heliodorus, the author of the novel *Aethiopica*, calls himself "a Phoenician from Emesa" (10, 41, 3).

However we ought to characterise the cultural background out of which the Emesa of Roman imperial times emerged, Seyrig elsewhere saw its brief prosperity as a city as having been closely linked to the caravan trade of Palmyra.[94] That raises questions which cannot be dealt with here. All I wish to emphasise is that there is nothing to show that Emesa or its cult even existed

90. A. von Gerkan, "Die Entwicklung des grossen Tempels von Baalbek," *Corolla Ludwig Curtius zum 60. Geburtstag dargebracht* (1937) 55ff. = E. Boehringer, ed., *Von antiker Architektur und Topographie: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Stuttgart, 1959), 267–71.

91. Sullivan (n. 75).

92. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes, 95: le culte du Soleil en Syrie à l'époque romaine," *Syria* 48 (1971): 337–66.

93. J. Starcky, "Stèle d'Elahagabal," *Mélanges Université St.-Joseph* 49 (1975–76): 501ff.

94. H. Seyrig, "Antiquités syriennes, 76: caractères de l'histoire d'Emése," *Syria* 36 (1959): 184–92.

in the Hellenistic period proper. One hypothesis is to see its emergence as a product of the movement of "Arabs" inwards from the desert fringes, followed by their settlement and creation of a new cult, or at any rate one which was new to that site.

If we move somewhat further north, to Seleucus' foundation at Apamea, here in the Roman Empire there was a cult of a non-Greek deity, whom Dio (79, 8, 5) describes as "Jupiter called Belos, who is worshipped in Apamea in Syria" and who gave oracular responses. The god Bēl, worshipped also in Palmyra,[95] is first attested in Babylonia. How and when the cult had come to be set up in a Greek city, or to be associated with a cult already there, we do not know.[96] But in the entire range of our evidence there is probably no more concentrated example of cultural fusion than the brief inscription from Apamea published by Rey-Coquais,[97] a Greek dedication by a Roman citizen: "On the order of the greatest holy god Bēl, Aurelius Belius Philippus, priest and *diadochos* [successor] of the Epicureans in Apamea."

The enigma of Hellenistic Syria—of the wider Syrian region in the Hellenistic period—remains. None the less, I am tempted to speculate that the positive impact of Hellenistic rule was relatively slight. If we think of it in terms of the foundation of wholly new cities, these were not numerous, except in northern Syria, and only a few of them are known to have closely resembled what we think of as a fully fledged Greek city. If we think of an economic or social impact, there were many areas where the Seleucid Empire certainly never exercised any direct or effective control.[98] What the Seleucid state did was to raise taxes where it could, and to enrol troops either (perhaps) by direct levies among Macedonian *klērouchoi* (colonists) or, more probably, via the Greek cities, like Cyrrhus, via local dynasts like the Hasmoneans, who from time to time supplied contingents, or were supposed to (1 Macc. 10:36; 11:44), or from Arab dynasts like Zabdibelus, who led 10,000 Arabs at the battle of Raphia in 217 (Polybius 5, 79, 8). The Seleucid state, like most ancient states, was primarily a system for extracting taxes and forming armies. Much of Syria was disputed territory between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic

95. J. Teixidor, *The Pagan God: Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East* (1977), 135–40.

96. Balty and Balty (n. 21), 129, n. 184C; J. Balty, "L'oracle d'Apamée," *AC* 50 (1981): 5–14.

97. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Inscriptions grecques d'Apamée," *AAAS* 23 (1973): 67.

98. But see the preface by the editors to Kuhrt and Sherwin-White (n. 45), ix–xii; S. M. Sherwin-White, "Seleucid Babylonia: A Case Study for the Installation and Development of Greek Rule," in Kuhrt and Sherwin-White (n. 45), 1–31; J.-F. Salles, "The Arab-Persian Gulf under the Seleucids," in Kuhrt and Sherwin-White (n. 45), 75–109.

kingdoms throughout the third century B.C. Antiochus IV's final invasion of Egypt in 168 had as an immediate consequence the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem (or so it seemed to one contemporary, Daniel 11:30–31), and the imposition of a Seleucid garrison. A mere six years later, with the escape of Demetrius I from Rome, there began a series of civil wars over the succession to the Seleucid throne which did not end until the occupation of Syria first by Tigranes of Armenia and then by the Romans.

The nature of the Seleucid state, as seen by its subjects, is suggested by the importance of the right of *asylia* (asylum) as granted to cities,[99] just as it is by Ptolemaeus' concern, immediately after the conquest of southern Syria, to have his villages protected from billetting by the Seleucid army (see text following n. 57 above). Some decades later, after the death of Antiochus VII Sidetes while on campaign against the Parthians in 129, his *stratēgos* (general) Athenaeus, when in flight, was refused entry or supplies by the villages which had been "wronged in connection with the *epistathmeiai* [quartering of soldiers]" (Diod Sic. 34/5, 17, 2).

It is worth suggesting the hypothesis that the remarkable absence of tangible evidence from Syria in the Hellenistic period may not be an accident which further discovery would correct, but the reflection of a real absence of development and building activity in an area dominated by war and political instability. Given this absence of evidence, we cannot expect to know much about the culture of Syria in this period, or whether there was, except along the coast, any significant evolution towards the mixed culture which came to be so vividly expressed in the Roman period. The hints which we gain of such a culture are hardly worth mentioning: for instance the fact that Meleager of Gadara, whose epigrams are entirely Greek in spirit, at least knew what words were used as expressions of greeting both in Aramaic and in Phoenician.[100] But there is nothing in the quite extensive corpus of his poetry to show that he had deeply absorbed any non-Greek culture in his native city, although no formal Greek or Macedonian settlement is attested there.[101] On the contrary, he self-consciously represented his native city as "Attic Gadara situated among the *Assyrioi*," and says of himself "If [I am] a Syrian, what is the wonder? My friend, we inhabit a single homeland, the world."[102] For evidence of non-Greek culture on the part of the inhabitants

99. E. Bickermann, *Institutions des Séleucides* (1938), 155.

100. *Anth. Pal.* 7.419; A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* (1965), 217, no. iv.

101. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 132–36.

102. *Anth. Pal.* 7.417; Gow and Page (n. 100), 216, no. ii.

of inland Syrian cities in the Hellenistic period, one can add a passing allusion to the fact that Antonius could find in Antioch in the 30s B.C. a leading citizen who knew Aramaic, or perhaps Parthian (Plutarch *Ant*. 41).

One of the major problems in the understanding of Hellenistic Syria is thus the relative scarcity of direct and contemporary evidence for any non-Greek culture, or cultures, in the region, either in the Achaemenid or the Hellenistic period itself. That might not matter, if we were confident that the evidence available for the Roman imperial period could be used to show cultural continuity, rather than the importation of new elements, from the desert, from Babylonia, or from Mesopotamia. The question of chronology may be crucial, and certainly cannot be ignored. To give one central example, in his famous book of 1937, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, Bickerman argues that we should envisage the pagan cult imposed in 167 B.C. on the Temple in Jerusalem not as Greek but as Syrian. In particular he explains the emphasis which Jewish sources place specifically on the desecration of the altar by the "abomination of desolation," by the parallel of Arab worship of the altar as a cult object in itself. To reinforce this, he uses the example of an inscription from Jebel Sheikh Barakat near Beroea (Aleppo) with a dedication to Zeus Madbachos, "Zeus of the Altar." But there is an acute problem of chronology here: the temple from which this inscription comes did not exist in the second century B.C. It was constructed by persons with Greek names between the 50s and the 120s A.D.; the earliest inscriptions recording its dedication to Zeus Madbachos and Selamanes, "the ancestral gods," probably date to the 50s A.D.[103]

The ancestors of these people may indeed have worshipped these same deities through the Hellenistic period. The god Shulman/Selamanes is in fact attested in Syria long before that. But nobody, so far as we know, put up a temple for these gods on this site, or composed a dedicatory inscription for them until the first century A.D. The problem therefore remains. Whatever the society, economy, and culture of the Syrian region was like in the Hellenistic period, the "Hellenistic" Syria, with a distinctive mixed culture, which our evidence allows us to encounter is that which evolved under the Roman Empire.[104]

That is, however, in the first instance, a fact about our evidence. It is not presented here as a definite conclusion about the "real" world of the Syrian

103. *IGLS* II, nos. 465–75; see O. Callot and J. Marcillet-Jaubert, "Hauts-lieux de la Syrie du Nord," *Temples et Sanctuaires* (1984), 185ff.

104. See esp. Teixidor (n. 95), for the popular religion attested in the inscriptions of this period.

region in the Hellenistic period, but as a strategic device whose purpose is precisely to bring into sharper relief significant new items of evidence as they appear. Firstly, to insist on the sparseness of evidence for the culture and social structure of the region in the Achaemenid period, with the possible exception of Judaea, and to a lesser extent Phoenicia, is to prevent the unconscious projection of general notions about "oriental" or "Near Eastern" civilisation on to this area. Secondly, to emphasise the limits of the empirical data which we can actually use to give substance to the notion of "Hellenisation" or "Hellenism" in this particular time and place is both to call these concepts into question and to insist on testing them, so far as possible, area by area and period by period. Thirdly, the notion of a "fusion" of cultures is doubly open to question if we have very little direct evidence for the nature of either of the cultures concerned, let alone for the manner in which they may have interacted, or occupied separate spheres. "Hellenisation" might, as is often supposed, have extended very little outside the towns or the upper classes. Yet as regards towns, or urban centres, there is enough evidence to suggest that it was possible to absorb Greek culture without losing local traditions; and that Hierapolitans, Phoenicians, and Samaritans when abroad positively emphasised their non-Greek identity.

Nor, by contrast, is it certain that country areas remote from the centres of Greek or Macedonian settlement remained immune to Greek presence or influence. This paper concludes with what seems to be (so far) the only formal bilingual inscription, in Greek and Aramaic, dating to the Hellenistic period, and discovered west of the Euphrates. This is a dedication from Tel Dan, first published in a brief archaeological report and discussed by Horsley in one of his valuable surveys of new material relevant to early Christianity.[105] The site seems to have been a high place of the Israelite period (tenth–ninth centuries B.C.), on which further construction, possibly including an altar, subsequently took place in the Hellenistic period. The inscription, carved on a limestone slab, seems to date to the late third or early second century B.C. (*BE* 1977, no. 542). The Greek text, quite finely carved, presents no problems: "To the god who is in Dan Zoilos (offers) his vow" (*theōi / tōi en Danois / Zōilos euchēn*). Immediately underneath it comes an Aramaic text, more amateurishly carved, of which just enough survives to show that the author, and hence the date, is the same. It reads either [BD]N NDR ZYLS L'[LH'] — "In

105. A. Biran, "Chronique archéologique: Tell Dan," *RB* 84 (1977): 256–63; G. H. R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* I: *A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published in 1976* (1981), no. 67.

[Da]n, vows of ZYLS (Zoilos) to the god," or (more probably) [H]N NDR ZYLS L'[LH' DN]—"[This] (is the) vow (of) Zoilos to the [god in Dan]."

On either interpretation, this modest document is of immense significance for the cultural and religious history of the Syrian region. Firstly, it is one of the earliest formal Greek inscriptions from the whole area. Secondly, it is both the only formal Aramaic (as opposed to Phoenician) inscription and the only formal Greek-Semitic bilingual inscription (as opposed to ostraca) from the Syrian region in the Hellenistic age. Thirdly, the archaeological evidence clearly suggests the continuation, or at least the resumption, of worship at an ancient cult site. Fourthly, the site itself occupies an inland location, near the headwaters of the Jordan, separated from the coast by some forty kilometres of hill country, and some fifty kilometres away from the nearest Greek, or semi-Greek, cities, Damascus and Gadara. There is no way of knowing whether Zoilos was an immigrant Greek who had either acquired some knowledge of Aramaic, or at least knew the necessity of having his vow recorded also in Aramaic; or whether he was a person of Syrian origin who had learned Greek, and adopted the Greek custom of the dedicatory inscription, and paired it with an inscription of a less well established type, in his native Aramaic. In either case a rustic cult centre saw worship directed to its nameless deity and recorded in a fine Greek inscription. Here at last we have a precise example, from the earlier Hellenistic period, of the meeting of two identifiable cultures.

CHAPTER TWO

The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation[*]

> When Alexander was civilising Asia, Homer was commonly read, and the children of the Persians, of the Susianians and of the Gedrosians learned to chant the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides. And although Socrates, when tried on a charge of introducing foreign deities, lost his cause to the informers who infested Athens, yet through Alexander Bactria and the Caucasus learned to revere the gods of the Greeks. Plato wrote a work on the one ideal constitution, but because of its forbidding character he could not persuade anyone to adopt it; but Alexander established more than seventy cities among savage tribes and sowed all Asia with Grecian magistracies, and thus overcame its uncivilised and brutish manner of living.

These familiar words of Plutarch (*Mor.* 328 D–E, Loeb trans.) begin to seem not quite as foolish as they did, in the light of modern discoveries in Aï Khanum and Kandahar. They may thus serve to raise some larger questions. Firstly, it is curious how Plutarch concentrates on remote central Asian areas which were no longer Hellenised in any obvious sense in his own day. Secondly, he emphasises, as we would expect, the creation of new cities with Greek constitutions. Here we might well turn to a neglected passage of his older contemporary, Josephus, concluding his account of the tower of Babel.

[*] First published in *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 209 (1983): 54–71. Earlier versions were read at the Cambridge Philological Society in April 1982 and subsequently at the Institut für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik in Munich and at the Istituto di Storia Antica at Pavia. Since it cannot pretend in any case to be more than a sketch, it has been left in the same form, with added annotation.

> Of the peoples, some still preserve the names which were given to them by their founders, some have changed them, while others have adopted a form of name designed to be more intelligible to those who are settled among them. It is the Greeks who are responsible for this. For when they subsequently rose to power they appropriated to themselves even the glory of the past, adorning the peoples with names which were intelligible to themselves and imposing on them a form of constitution as if they were descended from themselves. (*Ant.* 1, 121, Loeb trans.)

A little later he gives a specific example: "Amathus . . . which is still called 'Amathe' by the local people [*epichorioi*], though the Macedonians named it 'Epiphaneia' after one of the *epigonoi* [Alexander's successors]" (*Ant.* 1, 138). Jerome confirms that "until our own time" the town was still called Hamath "both by the Syrians [*Syri*] and by the Hebrews [*Hebraei*]" (*Hebr. Qu. Gen.* 10, 15–18, in *CCL* LXXII, 13). It is of course an unquestionable fact that there was large-scale city foundation by the Seleucids, primarily Seleucus I, in North Syria, in the Orontes valley, and in Mesopotamia. I need only refer to Seyrig's classic study of the urbanisation of North Syria by Seleucus I.[1] The effect in both areas was to produce, in the first instance, societies with two separate cultures: the Aramaic culture of Hellenistic Syria remains, it is true, almost invisible to us; the Akkadian culture of Babylonia, using the cuneiform script, was to survive at least until the first century A.D. It is not irrelevant to the present study that it produced one native-born interpreter in Greek, Berosus of Babylon, in the early Hellenistic period.[2] It was this world of contrasting cultures in Mesopotamia and Syria, cultures whose nature and functioning in the Graeco-Roman period remain almost wholly unintelligible, which eventually produced something like a fusion of cultures, in the form of Syriac Christianity. To illustrate this point I need only mention that Syriac literature originally stemmed from a Macedonian colony, Edessa.

All recent studies of Hellenisation or "Hellenism" have emphasised that a *fusion* of Greek and native cultures was categorically *not* what Greeks of the fourth century and after had intended. We have all learnt from Momigliano's *Alien Wisdom* (1975) how slight an interest Greeks took in other cultures. Martin Hengel in *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians* (1980) and Claire Préaux

1. H. Seyrig, "Séleucus I et la fondation de la monarchie syrienne," *Syria* 47 (1970): 290. Note also the important study, by P. Briant, "Colonisation hellénistique et populations indigènes: la phase d'installation," *Klio* 60 (1973): 57 = P. Briant, *Rois, tributs et paysans: études sur les formations tributaires du Moyen-Orient ancien* (1982).

2. *FGrH* 680. See S. M. Burstein, *The Babyloniaca of Berossus* (Sources and Monographs, Sources from the Ancient Near East, 1.5, 1978).

in her great masterpiece, *Le monde hellénistique* I–II (1978), as previously in "Réflexions sur l'entité hellénistique," *Chron. d'Eg.* 40 (1965): 129, have made clear that the conscious expressions of Greek opinion available to us envisage either an export of Greeks and their culture or at the most an adoption of that culture by "barbarians"; and that is of course also the retrospective view of Plutarch, with which I began. Pierre Briant (n. 1) has also argued that the Hellenistic foundations did in fact function, at least in the initial phase, as nuclei of social segregation and dominance in relation to the indigenous populations.

These analyses in effect seek—more or less successfully—to remove Droysen's notion of *Verschmelzung* from the logical field of the intentions of the actors in the fourth century and Hellenistic period. They are of considerable importance, even if—as is obvious—we cannot and do not *know* how the main actors, Alexander and the Seleucid kings, conceived the role of the cities which they founded. But two points arise in regard to Phoenicia in particular. Firstly, since the foundation of Greek cities is central to the process of Hellenisation "from above," it is important to emphasise that such foundations, if they took place at all, were not characteristic of coastal Phoenicia. Of the cities along the coast which Pseudo-Scylax listed in the mid-fourth century (*GGM* I, 78–79), almost all preserved their ancient non-Greek names and were not refounded—Arados, Tyre, Sidon, Botrys, Berytus, Sarepta, Ake, Doros, Joppa (so also Byblos, which this confused text does not mention). There is one clear marginal exception: Callimachus, coins, and the Zenon papyri all show that Ake had become "Ptolemais" by the 250s B.C.;[3] there is also another possible (and temporary) exception, if coins of the second century B.C. with the legend *in Phoenician* "Laodicea, which is in [*or* metropolis of] Canaan" are rightly attributed to Berytus.[4] It is also a curious fact that Tripolis already had this Greek name when Pseudo-Scylax was writing; what is more he explains it by the fact that the city was in some way tripartite, divided among Arados, Tyre, and Sidon. None the less, it has been suggested that a Phoenician root ṬRP with the meaning "grasp," or here "new foundation," might lie behind this term. The explanation is speculative, to say the least, but cannot wholly be ruled out.[5]

3. For the evidence Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 122.

4. *BMC Phoenicia* 1ff., 51–52. See R. Mouterde, "Regards sur Beyrouth phénicienne, hellénistique et romaine," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 40 (1964): 156.

5. K. Galling, "Die syrisch-palästinische Küste nach der Beschreibung des Pseudo-Skylax," *Studien zur Geschichte Israels im persischen Zeitalter* (1964), 191. The question of the name is not discussed in the valuable article by J. Elayi, "Studies in Phoenician Geography during the Persian Period," *JNES* 41 (1982): 91–92.

Phoenicia thus provides a very clear exception to Josephus' general picture. No Greeks colonised Arados, Tyre, Sidon, or Byblos or re-named them in ways intelligible to themselves. Did any Seleucid or Ptolemaic king *give* any of them a new, Greek constitution? That is a question which we must postpone for a moment.

At all events the traces of an organised, deliberate effort of Hellenisation in Phoenicia are markedly slight. But even if no Greeks intended to "Hellenise" Phoenicia, such a Hellenisation might still have occurred. What is more, from the fact that (as it seems) no Greeks sought a *Verschmelzung* in Droysen's sense, it does not in the least follow that no such fusion took place. If we take only the two most obvious criteria, language and architectural forms, then we have two perfectly clear cases of mixed cultures which evolved in the Hellenistic period on the desert fringes of the Syrian region: in Nabataea from the early Hellenistic period onwards and in Palmyra from the late Hellenistic period onwards.[6]

The case of Phoenicia, however, has two extra dimensions which make it quite different from any other area in the Near or Middle East. The first, and more important, is the surviving effects of Phoenician colonisation. If I may digress for a moment, our view of ancient Mediterranean history remains, in spite of all our efforts, firmly Graeco-Roman. But we really could now write a Phoenician-Punic orientated history of the Mediterranean from the eighth century onwards, which would focus on the nature, spread, survival, and decline of Phoenician-Punic culture in Phoenicia itself, in Cyprus, in North Africa, in Sicily, in Spain, in Sardinia, and marginally in Italy.[7] We are not talking about an insignificant or short-lived phenomenon. Let us take for instance a neo-Punic inscription from Bitia in Sardinia, which deserves a special place among the quite extensive Punic and neo-Punic inscriptions from the western Mediterranean. This is a building inscription, dated by a ruler whose name, written in neo-Punic letters, comes out as ['MP]R'ṬR Q'YSR M'RQH 'WRHLY 'NṬNYNH ['']WGSṬH—"Imperator Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus," namely Marcus Aurelius, Caracalla or Elaga-

6. For Nabataea, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, app. 2; Y. Meshorer, *Nabataean Coins* (Qedem III, 1975); M. Lindner, ed., *Petra und das Königreich der Nabatäer*[2] (1974). For Palmyra, see M. A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (1976).

7. For Phoenician settlement, note C. R. Whittaker, "The Western Phoenicians: Colonisation and Assimilation," *PCPS* 20 (1974): 58, and the important volume edited by H. G. Niemeyer, *Phönizier im Westen* (Madrider Beiträge VIII, 1982). For a sketch of the role of Punic in the western Mediterranean in the Roman period, see W. Röllig, "Das Punische im römischen Reich," in G. Neumann and J. Untermann, eds., *Die Sprachen im römischen Reich der Kaiserzeit* (1980), 285.

bal.[8] It does not matter which. For what the inscription shows is that at least *four* centuries after the Roman acquisition of Sardinia, Punic was still known, was used, and could be composed and written. We perhaps talk too glibly of the Romanisation of the western Mediterranean. It surely depended more than we have allowed on a previous Hellenisation or Punicisation (or whatever the word should be). Punic culture survived not only in Sardinia; in Africa Punic could be written until the second or third centuries, in neo-Punic, Latin, or Greek characters, and was spoken, at any rate as a peasant language, at least until the end of the fourth century A.D.[9] When Augustine's friend Valerius heard some peasants near Hippo use the word "shalosh" to mean three, he was very interested—but only because the concept "three" meant the Trinity and "shalosh" sounded hopefully like *salus*, salvation (*PL* XXXV, 2096). For our purposes it is a pity that he was not more intrigued by the fact that Punic had remained in use for no less than five and a half centuries after the end of Carthage—and that the peasants, when questioned, duly identified themselves as *Chanani*, "Canaanites."

I use these examples mainly as models, to raise the question of what *might* have happened in Phoenicia proper. But in the Hellenistic period at least there is also some direct connection with the western colonies, a connection which was maintained unbroken through the period of Macedonian conquest. Everybody knows that the Phoenicians firmly declined Cambyses' order to sail against Carthage (Herodotus 3, 19); but we may also recall that when besieged by Alexander the Tyrians sent at least some non-combatants to Carthage (Diodorus 17, 41, 1–2). Moreover, when Alexander took the place, he captured there some Carthaginian envoys who had come "in accordance with an ancient law" to worship Herakles/Melqart (Arrian, *Anab.* 2, 24, 5.). Publication is also awaited of a fourth-century B.C. *Punic* funeral stele from near Tyre, of a native of Carthage who evidently died there.[10] But far more important is Polybius' splendid story of the escape of the Seleucid king Demetrius I from Rome in 162, in which he himself assisted; for the ship on which Demetrius travelled was a Carthaginian one on its way to take first-fruits to Tyre (31, 12, 11–12). If this obligation was maintained a mere sixteen

8. For the text, see M. G. Guzzo Amadasi, *Le iscrizioni fenicie e puniche delle colonie in Occidente* (1967), 133, no. 8; *KAI*, no. 173.

9. See F. Millar, "Local Cultures in the Roman Empire: Libyan, Punic and Latin in Roman Africa," *JRS* 58 (1968): 126 (= chapter 12 of Fergus Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*); see also Röllig (n. 7).

10. This is reported by J. Teixidor in "Bulletin d'épigraphie sémitique," 1977, no. 93, published in *Syria* 54.

years before the fall of Carthage, we can safely assert that the links between mother-city and colony never were broken.

These links have in any case to be seen against the background of the continued presence of Tyrians in the western Mediterranean; for instance, in the third or second century B.C. two Tyrian brothers made a dedication in Malta to Herakles/Melqart, the inscription being bilingual in Phoenician and Greek.[11] Nor was it ever forgotten that the Herakles whom Hellenised Tyrians worshipped (e.g., *Inscriptions de Délos*, no. 1519, from 153/2 B.C.) was really Melqart; this identification, already present in the pages of Herodotus, is clearly asserted by Lucian, *dea Syra* 3. It was also surely not unknown to the Tyrian who in Lucian's time, to be precise A.D. 187/88, made a dedication to *theos hagios* (the holy god) Herakles; a man by the name of Diodorus, son of Nithumbalus. It can hardly be an accident that the Greek name of the son has precisely the same meaning—"gift of god"—as the Phoenician name of the father.[12]

That brings me to the second dimension. Phoenician culture seems in some sense to have spread inland as well as overseas in the Hellenistic period, as Punic culture did also in North Africa after 146 B.C. This fact brings Phoenician culture into connection with the familiar phenomenon of the fusion of Greek and non-Greek deities in Syria, or alternatively the survival of non-Greek cults in a Hellenised environment. There is nowhere where it appears more vividly before us than in Herodian's description of the cult of Elagabal at Emesa (5, 3, 2–6); what is significant is that Herodian thought that "Elagabal" was a Phoenician name and that Julia Maesa was "by origin a *Phoinissa*"; it is relevant that Heliodorus, the author of the *Aethiopica*, also describes himself (10, 41, 3) as a "Phoenician from Emesa." Similarly, according to Josephus, in the 160s B.C. the Samaritans identified themselves as "Sidonians in Shechem" and asked that the nameless God to whom their temple was dedicated should be called "Zeus Hellenios" (*Ant.* 12, 257–64). On the one hand, this evidence provides the essential analogy on which Bickerman based the view put forward in *Der Gott den Makkabäer*: that what the Maccabees were reacting against was a conscious reform movement within Judaism, designed to preserve the cult of the Highest God in a form acceptable to the rest of the Hellenistic world. On the other hand, it is further evidence, like the well-known inscriptions (in Greek) of the "Sidonians in Marissa" in Idumaea,[13]

11. Guzzo Amadasi (n. 8), no. 1.

12. See M. Chéhab, "Tyr à l'époque romaine," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 38 (1962): 13, on p. 17.

13. *OGIS* 593. Note the re-examination of the extent of Hellenisation in Marisa by G. Horowitz, "Town Planning of Hellenistic Marisa," *PEQ* 112–13 (1980–81): 93.

that people in the inland areas could identify themselves as Phoenicians or Sidonians. The history of the Jews, from the kingdom onwards, is in any case to be seen as that of a small community in the hinterland, in the hills of Judaea or Galilee, behind the Phoenician, and a bit later Phoenician-Greek, cities of the coast; and the inland extension of Phoenician culture can only have intensified contacts. Phoenician is also the closest Semitic language to Hebrew; and to the very end Tyrian shekels were the standard currency in which the Temple dues were to be paid.[14] Jesus and his followers did not have to travel very far to cross into the territory of Tyre and Sidon, where they met a woman whom Mark (7:26) calls a "Greek woman, a Syro-Phoenician by birth," and Matthew (15:22) a "Canaanite." By comparison with the hopeless confusingness of most ethnic labels from antiquity this contrasted pair is actually quite informative.

Opinions of course differ on the question of how fundamentally the Judaism which Jesus represented had itself been Hellenised. I would still hold to the view that what is significant is not such Hellenisation as there was, but the maintenance of a historical, religious, and cultural tradition enshrined in sacred books in Hebrew (which were however available, even in Judaea, in Greek translation) and which could generate further religious works in both Hebrew and Aramaic.[15] Given the very close geographical, historical, and linguistic links between Judaea and Phoenicia, we may reasonably allow the vitality of Jewish historical and religious culture to pose the question as to whether, or to what extent, the same might have been true of Phoenicia.

It is indeed at this level alone, or so it seems to me, that we can actually approach the question of the Hellenisation of the Phoenician cities: that is the level of conscious historical tradition and identity. The archaeological record for this period is extremely poor; nothing that I have found, at any rate, has given me any clear conception of a material culture of Phoenicia in the Persian period,[16] which might or might not have been transformed by Hellenistic influences. Nor, I think, is it possible to discern anything about any possible changes in the relations of production. Whether or not it is useful to talk of an "Asiatic mode of production,"[17] the question is often asked whether

14. See A. Ben-David, *Jerusalem und Tyros: ein Beitrag zu palästinensischen Münz-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, 126 a.c.–57 p.c.* (1969).

15. F. Millar, "The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*," *JJS* 29 (1978): 1 (= chapter 4 in the present volume).

16. Compare, however, E. Stern, *Material Culture of the Lands of the Bible in the Persian Period, 538–332 B.C.* (1982).

17. See most recently L. Zaccagnini, "Modo di produzione asiatico e vicino Oriente antico. Appunti per una discussione," *Dial. di Arch.* 3 (1981): 3.

Hellenisation brought with it a system of production based on the ownership of slaves by private persons; or whether on the contrary no such change took place, large-scale landownership, with the land being worked by dependent labourers, remained the rule, and therefore the Greek *polis* in Asia bore no real resemblance to the original, as Kreissig has argued.[18] Such fundamental questions of social structure seem difficult to relate to Phoenicia if only because, from what little we know, the Phoenician cities seem already to have exhibited a market economy based on private wealth, in which trade was at any rate a distinctive feature. That is to say, they exhibited what has been called *Vorhellenismus*, namely being rather like Greek *poleis* anyway.[19]

Nor have we enough evidence even to illustrate the effects of entry into the Hellenistic world on ordinary life in Phoenicia. By contrast we have Aramaic ostraca of the third century B.C. from Idumaea, from Jerusalem, and from Elath which already show extensive penetration of Greek loan-words in economic life, even at this early date.[20] In Phoenician, so far as I know, we have no such non-formal written documents from this period. The nearest we have are mere scraps of evidence: an inscribed jar from near Jaffa, probably of the later fourth century;[21] or a badly damaged Phoenician papyrus of unknown origin, now in the Cairo Museum, and thought to be of the fourth or third century, which is in some way concerned with the delivery of natural products.[22]

There seems at the moment to be no way of reaching any idea of changes in the structure of ordinary life from the Persian to the Hellenistic period in Phoenicia. What can be done is perhaps three things: to look at the continued use of Phoenician as represented on formal inscriptions put up by individual Phoenicians abroad in the Hellenistic period; to look at the evolution of the cities as communities; and to ask if there was anything which resembled the continuous historical and religious tradition which is so strikingly charac-

18. H. Kreissig, "Die Polis in Griechenland und im Orient in der hellenistischen Epoche," in E. C. Welskopf, ed., *Hellenische Poleis* II (1974), 1074.

19. J. P. Weinberg, "Bemerkungen zum Problem 'Der Vorhellenismus im Vorderen Orient,' " *Klio* 58 (1976): 5. For a very useful survey of the available evidence, note J. Elayi, "The Phoenician Cities in the Persian Period," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 12 (1980): 13.

20. Idumaea: L. T. Geraty, "The Khirbet el-Kôm Bilingual Ostracon," *BASOR* 220 (1975): 55. Jerusalem: F. M. Cross, "An Aramaic Ostracon of the Third Century B.C.E. from Excavations in Jerusalem," *Eretz Israel* 15 (1981): 67*. Elath: N. Glueck, "Ostraca from Elath," *BASOR* 80 (1940): 3.

21. B. Peckham, "An Inscribed Jar from Bat-Yam," *IEJ* 16 (1966): 11.

22. *KAI*, no. 51.

teristic of Judaea. In other words if our evidence will tell us anything, it is only at the level of conscious, formal expression.

If we were to set out laboriously to collect the epigraphic references to, or by, citizens of the Phoenician cities abroad in the Hellenistic world, we know anyway what we would find: that the majority appear as Greek in language and nomenclature.[23] Nor would we learn anything significant if we collected all the examples of Semitic names in use among these people, as they certainly were throughout the classical period. It does, however, have some significance, if only illustrative, that at least some Phoenicians abroad continued to compose and inscribe texts in Phoenician. At Demetrias, for example, three men from the third century B.C., all with Greek names—one from Sidon, one from Arados, and one from Kition—have left brief inscriptions in Phoenician.[24] In Athens we have a bilingual Greek-Phoenician inscription giving a fine example of equivalence, or semi-equivalence, in theophoric names. Artemidorus son of Heliodorus, a Sidonian, appears in his Phoenician form as 'BD TNT BN 'BDŠMŠ. Tanit therefore equals Artemis, as Shemesh (the Sun) certainly does Helios. But the root 'BD means "slave," not "gift" (as "-*dorus*" in "Heliodorus" does).[25] On another bilingual inscription, probably of the third century, from the Peiraeus, the female name 'SPT daughter of 'ŠMNŠLM is transliterated Ἀσεπτ Ἐσυμσελησου and a Phoenician dedication of an altar, perhaps of the second or first century, mentions a man who was son of B'LYṬWN, the ŠPṬ (*shofet*, i.e., "judge"; see text to n. 52 below).[26] There is also a substantial eight-line Phoenician inscription, accompanied by a one-line Greek text, from the Peiraeus, probably of the mid-third century, and dated by "the 14th year of the people of Sidon," which shows the *koinon* (community) of the Sidonians there crowning a religious official. Once again his Greek name, "Diopeithes," is vaguely equivalent to his Phoenician one, ŠMB'L—"God has heard."[27] There are also, for instance, three brief Phoenician-Greek bilingual inscriptions from Rhodes, probably of the early third century.[28]

Taken together, this scatter of inscriptions is of some significance. Citi-

23. For the case of Arados, see the collection by J.-P. Rey-Coquais, *IGLS* VII, 1187–90.

24. O. Masson, "Recherches sur le Phéniciens dans le monde hellénistique," *BCH* 93 (1969): 679.

25. *KAI*, no. 53: J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic inscriptions* III: *Phoenician inscriptions* (1982), no. 40.

26. G. A. Cooke, *Textbook of North Semitic Inscriptions* (1903), nos. 35, 34.

27. Cooke (n. 26), no. 33; *KAI*, no. 60; Gibson (n. 25), no. 41.

28. P. M. Fraser, "Greek-Phoenician Bilingual Inscriptions from Rhodes," *ABSA* 65 (1970): 31.

zens of Phoenician cities, who were not peasants and were well enough off to leave inscriptions, could not merely deploy both languages but could use equivalents both for the names of deities and for their own names. They did not have to inscribe in Phoenician as well, but chose to do so. In a small way these inscriptions are precise examples of that *Verschmelzung* which some modern scholarship has tended to deny.

A similar pattern is visible if we follow the communal life of the Phoenician cities through the period of transition. I will not try to rehearse the complicated evidence for the dynasties of Phoenician kings whom Alexander found. For instance, the dynasty of the kings of Sidon has been reconstructed in two quite different ways down to Abdalonymus, who was in power when Alexander arrived.[29] What is clear is that some kings remained in power after Alexander, and continued to issue Phoenician coinage in their own names, for instance in Arados, Byblos, and Tyre (where on the coinage of King Azemilkos continues from 347/6 to 306/5 B.C.).[30]

There was thus a certain continuity through the period of Alexander's conquests. But a change does seem to come in the first half of the third century. Philocles, "king of the Sidonians" (whose origins and career are highly uncertain),[31] is last heard of in about 280 B.C.; and the era "of the people of Sidon" (above) probably starts soon after that; the era of Tyre starts from 275; and Arados appears to have lost its king by about 259, when a new era starts, and the coinage makes no further reference to a king;[32] at about the same time the inventories of Delos record offerings by the "Byblioi" collectively, with no king mentioned.[33] So what happened? Are we to envisage a deposition of the kings and a grant or "charter" of the status of a Greek *polis* to these cities? That some such grant *could* happen is suggested by the request to Antiochus IV for the Jerusalemites to be enrolled as "Antiochenes" in the late 170s (2 Macc. 4:9). A. H. M. Jones implicitly, if not quite explicitly, identified this mid-third-century change in Phoenicia as an administrative act carried out from above: "a thorough reorganisation of the administrative system took

29. Compare E. T. Mullen, "A New Royal Sidonian Inscription," *BASOR* 216 (1974): 25, and M. Dunand, "Les rois de Sidon au temps des Pérses," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 49 (1975–76): 491.

30. A. Lemaire, "Le monnayage de Tyr et celui dit d'Akko dans la deuxième moitié du quatrième siècle av. J.-C.," *RN* 18 (1976): 11.

31. See J. Seibert, *Historia* 19 (1970): 337.

32. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, *Arados et sa pérée aux époques grecque, romaine et byzantine* (1974), 153–54.

33. E.g., *Ins. Délos*, no. 313 a. 34. See Ph. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos* (1970), 113.

place. In the first place the Phoenician dynasties were suppressed."[34] An even more confident characterisation is given by S. K. Eddy: "The Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, a part of the Ptolemaic Empire, were reorganised as hellenic *poleis* during the latter part of the third century, and they accepted this without protest."[35] But in fact it is not easy to see this process quite in those terms, if only because it took place more or less simultaneously in areas which were then under Ptolemaic control, such as Tyre and Sidon, and in the Seleucid Empire, at Arados. Thus a Phoenician inscription of 222 B.C., from Umm El-'Amed near Tyre, dated by the 26th year of Ptolemy III and the 53rd year of the people of Tyre.[36] In the next century another Phoenician inscription from the same site is dated to the 180th year of the Seleucid era and the 143rd of Tyre, i.e., 132 B.C.[37] We have already seen the Phoenician inscription from Athens dated by "the 14th year of the people of Sidon" (text following n. 26 above). These eras must certainly refer to precise events; but as to the nature of the events we have no evidence. No specific royal actions are attested in this connection. Moreover, whatever occurred cannot have been either the imposition or the acceptance of a fully Greek constitution. This is clear from the simple fact that both the documents (inscriptions and coin legends) and the actual institutions of these cities, Tyre above all, retained a mixed, Phoenician-Greek character. For instance there is a second-century B.C. inscription in Phoenician from Sidon which mentions what is evidently a man's official position, but it is unintelligible to us; the phrase is 'RB 'BR LSPṬ RB ŠNY.[38] Moreover, several persons each described as ŠPṬ (*shofet*: judge) are mentioned on an inscription from Tyre which is undated, but evidently later than the period of the kings;[39] we may note also a priest (KHN) of MLK-'ŠTRT at Umm el-'Amed near Tyre.[40] As is well known, Bickerman suggested convincingly that we should see such a judge (*shofet*) in the *dikastēs* named Diotimus mentioned on an inscription of circa 200 from Sidon (see text to n. 52 below). These documents, however difficult their interpretation may be, are surely sufficient to prove that public offices identified by Phoenician names existed in some cities after the supposed grants

34. A. H. M. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*[2] (1971), 238–39.

35. S. K. Eddy, *The King Is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism, 334–31 B.C.* (1961), 131.

36. *KAI*, no. 19; cf. M. Dunand and R. Duru, *Oumm el-'Amed* (1962), 185, no. 4 (without text); Gibson (n. 25), no. 31.

37. Cooke (n. 26), no. 9; *KAI*, no. 18; cf. Dunand and Duru (n. 36), 181, no. 1 (no text).

38. Cooke (n. 26), no. 7; cf. *BES* 1979, no. 121, for a discussion.

39. Cooke (n. 26), no. 8.

40. Dunand and Duru (n. 36), 188, no. 6.

of Greek constitutions by kings—events for which in any case there is no direct evidence.

It was long after the commencement of the "era of the people of Tyre" that they did gain a privilege from a king, namely *autonomia*; the grant is attested by Strabo, and the coins indicate a date of 126/5 B.C.[41] A royal grant is also mentioned in the case of Arados, from the Seleucid king Seleucus Callinicus (246–225 B.C.); but the privilege mentioned is not recognition as a Greek city but the right of asylum (Strabo, *Geog*. 754). However the coins of Arados, which begin in 243/2 B.C., date by an era of 259 B.C. At any rate whatever was being celebrated at Arados in the coining of tetradrachms between 243/2 and 190, it cannot have been Arados' status as a purely *Greek* city, since a large proportion are stamped in Phoenician letters; Greek lettering is of course also found.[42]

There are as yet no inscriptions from Arados itself from the Hellenistic period. When we finally arrive at the earliest inscription from Arados (*IGLS* VII, no. 4001), we are already in the reign of Augustus, 25/4 B.C.; but the inscription is bilingual, in Phoenician and Greek. The dedicant is a gymnasiarch, but bears a Phoenician name. The deities mentioned are Hermes —on this occasion the name is transliterated into Phoenician in the form 'RM[..]—and Herakles/Melqart. This seems also to be the latest firmly dated inscribed text in Phoenician. There is, however, one dedicatory Phoenician inscription from a temple in Byblos, which may be of the first century A.D. (*KAI*, no. 12). In the Roman period, so far as inscriptions reveal, the cities of Phoenicia appear as entirely Greek. We may think for instance of the famous inscription of the Tyrian traders at Puteoli in A.D. 174 (*OGIS* 595), with their letter addressed to the *archontes* (magistrates), *boulē* (council), and *dēmos* (people) of the city, and with the *acta* (proceedings or decisions) of the *boulē* which followed in response. None the less, two things are apparent in the inscriptions; the persistence of Phoenician names, and the battery of distinctive titles which the major cities claimed—"*hiera* [holy], *asylos* [with the right of asylum], *autonomos*, *mētropolis* [mother-city] of Phoenice and the cities of Coele Syria." Both features are attested for instance in the inscription put up at Didyma (*Ins. Didyma*, no. 151) by Tyre in honour of Julius Quadratus of Pergamon; the ambassadors were called Marion son of Marion and Zoilos son of Bodas. The inscriptions thus both embody a claim to a glorious past and reflect a local dispute for precedence which was to be long-lasting even by the standards of the ancient world. For it was in A.D. 448/50 that

41. Strabo, *Geog*. 757. For the coins *BMC Phoenicia* CXXV, 233–34.

42. See H. Seyrig, "Aradus et sa périée sous les rois séleucides," *Syria* 28 (1951): 206.

Theodosius II and Valentinian III ruled that Berytus also should have the title of *metropolis*. Tyre, they say, should not feel that her dignity was impaired: "Let her [Tyre] be mother of the province [*mater provinciae*] by the *beneficium* [favour] of our ancestors, and Berytus by ours" (*CJ* 11, 22, 1). "Mother of the province" is a distinctive (though not unique) term, which might reflect the Phoenician expression 'M ṢDNM—"mother of the Sidonians," which had appeared on the coins of Tyre in the Seleucid period, six centuries before.

In any case, if the inscriptions of the Roman period (so far at least) hardly reveal any Phoenician elements, the coins certainly do. It is true that it is only in the Hellenistic period that the coins carry intelligible legends in Phoenician. But under the Roman Empire the coins of Sidon and Tyre continue to show occasional whole words, and very frequently individual Phoenician letters; and in the case of Tyre these persist up to the late second century A.D.[43] That need not of course mean very much in terms of the survival of language. The letters could even have been a fossilised feature which no longer conveyed any specific meaning. But even so, once again, they did not *have* to be used. The fact that they were at least reflects a consciousness of continuity with a city's Phoenician past.

But was that all? The answer depends on whether we put any degree of trust in what our literary sources tell us.

According to Josephus, Tyre possessed archives which went back to the period of Hiram and Solomon. A number of passages in the *Antiquities* and *Against Apion* use their evidence as support for the authenticity of the Old Testament narrative. In most cases Josephus claims to be dependent on Hellenistic writers who had translated these documents, namely Menander of Ephesus (*Ant*. 8, 144 = *C. Ap*. 1, 116–17; *Ant*. 9, 283–87) or Dius (*Ant*. 8, 147–49; *C. Ap*. 1, 106–15). But in *Ant*. 8, 55 he is more explicit about the preservation of these documents: "To this day there remain copies of these letters, preserved not only in our books, but also by the Tyrians, so that if anyone wished to learn the exact truth, he would, by inquiring of the public officials in charge of the Tyrian archives [*gazophylakion*] find that their records are in agreement with what we have said" (Loeb trans.). Of course there are many difficulties about this. Josephus may still be repeating a Hellenistic source; and even if a Hellenistic writer truthfully related having translated a document preserved at Tyre, that document may itself have been a historical forgery. Moreover, the contents of the archives at Tyre are always, as quoted, alarmingly early. No one claims to have used a continuous archive coming down through the Persian and Hellenistic periods; the furthest we

43. See *BMC Phoenicia*, 166–67 (Sidon); 233–68 (Tyre).

get is from Josephus (*C. Ap.* 1, 155–58): a report of a Phoenician record of the kings of Tyre down to Cyrus' time. None the less, *either* what Josephus says is just false, *or* it was at least believed at Tyre that they possessed records which went back to the tenth century B.C. (Phoenician writing in fact went back earlier than this). But in any case it does not matter, since what is relevant for us is the sense of continuity with a pre-Greek past. Moreover, it was certainly believed in the Graeco-Roman world that there was an independent Phoenician historical tradition. So, in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*, one of the diners, addressing Ulpian of Tyre, the main speaker, talks of "those who write Phoenician histories, your compatriots, Sanchuniathon and Mochos" (126A). Mochos was supposed to have been a Sidonian who had lived before the Trojan War; Posidonius alleged that he had discovered the theory of atoms (Strabo, *Geog.* 757); Josephus mentions him in support of biblical reports of the longevity of the patriarchs (*Ant.* 1, 107). More relevant, he was one of three Phoenician writers whom one Laetus, an author of biographies of philosophers, is said by Tatian (*ad Gr.* 37) to have translated into Greek. Sanchuniathon, from Berytus, was also said to have written in Phoenician in the same period, and it was his work on Phoenician mythology which Philon of Byblos claimed to have translated in the early second century. The survival of some long extracts of this work in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* may be due to another Phoenician, Porphyry of Tyre (whose real name, Malchus, was Semitic, "Porphyrios" being a pun on Malchus—Melech—king). Nobody is going to reach agreement on the age or authenticity of the Phoenician original, if indeed there was one, as a literary work. An unprecedented volume of modern work on Philo's *History* has concurred in the view that its entire structure is Hellenistic.[44] Philo himself may have composed it de novo; or perhaps there may have been an early Hellenistic original, a parallel to the nationalistic expositions of Berosus and Manetho. It is also worth noting that the point that what passed as an independent Phoenician religious view-point was actually Greek had already been made by Pausanias (7, 23, 7–8). At Aegium, he reports, a Sidonian argued with him, saying that Phoenician ideas of divinity were superior to Greek ones; they said that Asclepius was air, and the son of Apollo, the Sun—Pausanias replied that this account was no more Phoenician than Greek. But it seems beyond all question that Philo's material *does* contain elements which are not derivable from

44. *FGrH* 790. See for instance L. Troiani, *L'opera storiografica di Filone da Byblos* (1974); R. A. Oden, "Philo of Byblos and Hellenistic Historiography," *PEQ* 110–11 (1978): 115; and a monograph containing text, translation, and discussion, A. I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos* (1981).

Greek traditions, and which can be brought into relation with the Phoenician divinities as they appear in the Ugaritic tablets and elsewhere. The entire work as preserved is based on Greek conceptions; but what can categorically *not* be asserted is that the material which finally came through to Eusebius, in Caesarea, was fictional, and not Phoenician at all. Among the fragments of Philo we may note also that in talking about human sacrifice in circumstances of extreme danger, he remarks that among the Phoenicians an only son is still called by a term, which he transliterates as *Ἰεούδ* in Greek (clearly reflecting the Semitic root for "one"; *FGrH* 790, F 3b), and their god is (still) called *El*. Furthermore, Eusebius, probably following Porphyry, claims that what was reported from Sanchuniathon gained credibility "from the names of the gods still used in the cities and villages of Phoenicia, and the myths attached to the mysteries celebrated among them" (*PE* 1, 10, 55). It is entirely consonant with this that modern detailed studies of the *Phoenician History* regard it not as good evidence for an actual literary work of the second millennium B.C., but as a reflection of Greek interpretations of Phoenician religion.

It would also be valuable if we could understand how "Phoenician" (if at all) Porphyry himself was; and on this I still cannot find any evidence.[45] That his *name* was Phoenician, and that he and his friends knew what it meant, is hardly very significant; nor is Eunapius' statement that he came "from Tyre, the foremost city of the ancient Phoenicians" (*Vit. Soph.* 455). But perhaps it is, precisely in that *that* was how it seemed relevant to Eunapius to characterise the place: it did not apparently matter to him that since about 198 the city had been a Roman *colonia*. We know this best of course from the other Ulpian of Tyre, not the Greek Sophist of Athenaeus but his relative (as he surely was), the lawyer: *ut est in Syria Phoenice splendidissima Tyriorum colonia, unde mihi origo est* (as is the most magnificent colony of the Tyrians in Syria Phoenice, from where I come, *Dig.* 50, 15, 1). He is stretching a point, or passing over one; for when he was born, which was certainly not later than 174 when the *boulē* (council) dismissed the complaints of the traders, and long before 187/8, when Diodorus son of Nithumbalus made his dedication to Herakles/Melqart, Tyre was still a Greek city. But was it perhaps something else as well? In Ulpian's eyes certainly: for he goes on: "distinguished among its neighbours, of the most remote antiquity, powerful in war, most tenacious of the treaty it struck with Rome." By "of the most remote antiquity" he did not mean merely that it had been a Hellenistic *Greek* city. If he did,

45. See F. Millar, "Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language and Alien Wisdom," in J. Barnes and M. T. Griffin, eds., *Philosophia Togata* II: *Plato and Aristotle at Rome* (1997), 241–62 (= chapter 13 in the present volume).

there had still been in his lifetime the Phoenician letters on the city's coins to remind him otherwise, as well as the Phoenician names borne by his fellow citizens. Did they also still speak a language distinct both from Greek and from Aramaic, as they certainly had when Meleager of Gadara, in about *100* B.C., composed his well-known epigram about how to greet someone in Aramaic, Greek, and Phoenician?[46] There is no direct evidence. But it is Ulpian who states that an *obligatio* (legal obligation) could undoubtedly be created by a question in Latin and an answer in Greek or vice versa, and who asks whether this principle could be extended "to another language, perhaps Punic or Assyrian" (*ad alium* [*sermonem*], *Poenum forte vel Assyrium*, *Dig.* 45, 1, 1, 6). "Assyrian" (*Assyrius sermo*) is certainly Aramaic; so perhaps Punic (*Poenus sermo*) is not the Punic of Africa or Sardinia,[47] but the other ancient language of his own area, Phoenician. The coupling of the two languages then reads quite naturally.

The Phoenician cities can therefore be taken to represent a rather special case of Hellenisation, and it is very striking how small a part they have played in discussions of the nature of Hellenism. They were not colonised or refounded by Alexander or his successors (the *diadochi*). They did not on the whole lose their names, in the way that Josephus described as typical. There are no clear indications that they were given Greek constitutions by the Ptolemies or Seleucids. On the other hand they most certainly did not remain un-Greek. They were not temple communities based on a priesthood, like Babylon or Jerusalem. They did in some sense become Greek cities, whose inhabitants were at home in the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman worlds. Yet the available evidence, scattered and inadequate though it is, surely suffices to show that there was much continuity with their Phoenician past—in language and perhaps in institutions; certainly in their cults; probably in some sort of literary tradition; *perhaps* in the preservation of archives; and certainly in a continuous historical consciousness. This last was helped of course by recognition from outside; we saw earlier how Carthage to the very end continued to send first-fruits to Tyre. How relevant was it that Punic continued in use in the western Mediterranean long after the fall of Carthage and well on into the Roman Empire? It is worth recalling also the dedication to Septimius Severus' son Geta, put up at Lepcis Magna by the city of Tyre, which is there called "the Septimian colony of Tyre, mother-city of Phoenicia and of other cities" (*Septimia Tyros Colonia*, *Metropolis Phoenices et aliarum civitatium*) (*IRT*, no. 437). That must be an allusion to the Phoenician colonisation of

46. *Anth. Pal.* 7, 419; A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* (1965), 217, no. iv.

47. So F. Millar (n. 9), 130–31.

North Africa, and is a parallel to Ulpian's reference to the antiquity of Tyre. A little later coins of Tyre show Dido supervising the foundation of Carthage.[48] Would it be pure speculation to see in this consciousness one source of the rash of grants of the status of *colonia* made to Syrian cities by Septimius Severus from Lepcis, the husband of a lady from Emesa (which Herodian and Heliodorus thought of as also being Phoenician)?

However, it is also relevant that the role of archaic Phoenicia in trade, shipping, and colonisation was a well-established part of the Graeco-Roman historical tradition.[49] For instance, Pliny the Elder (*NH* 5, 76) contrasts the modest commercial activity of the present—purple fishing—with Tyre's former glory as a colonising city; Strabo in the *Geography* (756–57) similarly emphasises the colonial past of Tyre, as well as the ship-building and trade of Sidon, and the Sidonian development of astronomy and arithmetic, as a result of the needs of navigation; while Pompeius Trogus in book 18 narrates in detail the flight of Elissa (Dido) from Tyre and the foundation of Carthage.

But of course the most important contribution to Graeco-Roman culture made by Phoenicia had been the art of alphabetic writing. Everybody (rightly) accepted that on the basis of Herodotus 5, 58, though Eupolemus, in the second century B.C., asserted that writing had been invented by Moses, who taught it to the Hebrews, after which it was transmitted by the Phoenicians to the Greeks.[50] It was so much a part of the common stock of historical knowledge that in the second century A.D. the Sophist Hadrianos of Tyre could open his first performance in Athens with the famous words "Again letters [*grammata*] have come from Phoenicia" (Philostratus, *VS* 2, 10). The content of his proclamation was familiar, but the point could not have been made with the same overtones by someone who was not from Phoenicia.

The transmission of the alphabet was of course only one element in the legend of Kadmos, the son of Agenor, who came from Tyre or Sidon, and after various adventures, including the search for his kinswoman, Europe, founded Thebes and ruled there. The infinitely varied forms which the legend took was studied by Ruth B. Edwards, *Kadmos the Phoenician* (1970). It is extremely significant that this legend was subsequently integrated and internalised in Phoenicia itself. We may not wish to use Achilles Tatius' novel *Leucippe and Cleitophon* as evidence, with its description of a painting

48. E.g., *BMC Phoenicia*, Tyre, no. 409; *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Danish National Museum: Phoenicia* (1961), no. 371.

49. For this tradition, see the exhaustive treatment by G. Bunnens, *L'expansion phénicienne en Méliterranée* (1979).

50. *FGrH* 723, F. 1. See B. Z. Wacholder, *Eupolemus* (1974).

of Europe to be seen in the temple of Astarte in Sidon (1, 1, 2) or its brief reference to the worship of Kadmos there (2, 2, 1). But the Hellenistic and imperial coins of Tyre and Sidon which represent Kadmos and Europe are incontrovertible evidence; on one Tyrian coin from the reign of Gallienus, Kadmos is shown giving a papyrus roll to three Greeks.[51] Equally good evidence is offered by the well-known inscription of the *dikastēs* or *shofet* (judge; see text to n. 26 above) from Sidon, Diotimus, who in the late third century B.C. won the chariot race at the Nemean games: "You were the first of the citizens to bring back from Greece the glory of the chariot race to the house of the descendants of Agenor. The sacred town of Cadmeian Thebes also rejoices to see her mother-city made famous by her victories."[52]

We might well see the Hellenisation of Phoenicia, in the first instance, as one of a number of examples from the eastern Mediterranean of a process which began long before Alexander. In Phoenicia, as in the other cases, it was based on long interaction with the Greek world,[53] and received a further impulse from the ambitions and self-glorification of fourth-century dynasts. Greek art had exerted a profound influence before Alexander; in this context we may note the beautifully cut and entirely Greek reliefs of the mid-fourth century on what is probably a throne from the sanctuary of Eshmun/Asklepios in Sidon.[54] But the most consistent evidence for Greek influences is provided by the coinages of the Phoenician cities, beginning in the fifth century; as Colin Kraay wrote, "The coinage of the Phoenician cities is the most notable and elaborate example of the transplantation of this Greek institution into an area culturally alien."[55] It may seem a paradox, but is not, that it was also these city coinages which were to continue longest to exhibit Phoenician lettering (text to n. 43 above) and themes from the Phoenician past (see above).

Fourth-century dynasts, in Phoenicia and elsewhere, certainly contributed something at least to the superficial Hellenisation of their areas. Thus, for instance, we have Theopompus' famous description of the luxury and

51. *BMC Phoenicia*, no. 318; Kadmos and Greeks: Tyre, no. 488, pl. XXXV.l.

52. E. Bikerman, "Sur une inscription grecque de Sidon," *Mélanges Dussaud* I (1939), 91. Translated by M. M. Austin, in *The Hellenistic World* (1981), no. 121.

53. See now P. J. Riis, "Griechen in Phönizien," in Niemeyer (n. 7), 237 (for the archaic period); J. N. Coldstream, "Greeks and Phoenicians in the Aegean," in Niemeyer (n. 7), 261.

54. E. Will, "Un nouveau monument de l'art grec en Phénicie: la 'tribune' du sanctuaire d'Echmoun à Sidon," *BCH* 100 (1976): 565.

55. C. M. Kraay, *Archaic and Classical Greek Coins* (1976), 286–92, on p. 291. Cf. M. H. Crawford, *La moneta in Grecia e a Roma* (1982), 68–69, suggesting Persian influence on the pattern of minting in Tyre and Sidon.

display of Straton of Sidon, his hiring of entertainers from Greece, and his rivalry with Nicocles of Salamis (Athenaeus, *Deipn*. 531). It was either this Straton or the one whom Alexander found in power under whom merchants from Tyre dedicated statues representing Tyre and Sidon to Delian Apollo, commemorating this with a bilingual inscription.[56] The impulse given to Hellenisation in Caria by the dynast is equally the main theme of Simon Hornblower's *Mausolus* (1982); and the dynastic monuments, the bi- and trilingual inscriptions, and the coins of fifth- and fourth-century Lycia provide ample evidence of comparable influences there.[57] We are thus presented with the agreeable paradox that the most clear and convincing cases of *Verschmelzung* in Droysen's sense from the Greek East with which our evidence now presents us were ones which began before Alexander, and where it remains quite unclear how much their cultural evolution owed to the Macedonian conquest.

In the case of Phoenicia, however, there was perhaps more to it than that. Firstly, the Phoenician cities already bore at least some resemblance to Greek city-states; it is not easy to say what if any significant social changes their (partial) evolution into Greek *poleis* will have necessitated. Secondly, and more important, when the Phoenicians began to explore the storehouse of Greek culture, they could find, among other things, themselves, already credited with creative roles—not all of which, as it happens, were purely legendary. If some aspects were just legend, like the story of Kadmos, what is clear is that the Phoenicians adopted it (perhaps, like the legend of Aeneas in Italy, very early) and made it their own. In doing so they acquired both an extra past and a reinforcement of their historical identity; and they also simultaneously gained acceptance as being in some sense Greeks. It is relevant to observe that the Romans, admitted to the Isthmian games in 228 B.C., probably a little before Diotimus of Sidon won the chariot race at Nemea, earned a similar acceptance on similar grounds. The famous inscription of the 190s from Lampsacus shows that the city appealed to the Romans as "relatives," on the basis of their descent from Troy.[58]

That was also, it need hardly be said, the period of the birth of Latin literature. We might well wonder why it was in Rome and not in Phoenicia that there evolved, entirely without the aid of a conquering Macedonian state, the only literary culture which really was a "fusion" in Droysen's sense.

56. *CIS* 1.1, no. 114: *Ins. Délos*, no. 50.

57. See W. A. P. Childs, "Lycian Relations with Persians and Greeks in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries Reexamined," *Anat. Stud*. 31 (1981): 55.

58. *Syll*.[3] 591; *I. K. Lampsakos* (1978), no. 4. Translated by Austin (n. 52), no. 155.

CHAPTER THREE

Hellenistic History in a Near Eastern Perspective: The Book of Daniel[*]

The Background

As with so many aspects of Hellenistic history, it is best to begin with the words of Polybius: "I shall bring the whole narrative of events to a conclusion, narrating finally the expedition of Antiochus Epiphanes against Egypt, the war with Perseus and the abolition of the Macedonian monarchy." Polybius is here developing his "second introduction," in the first few chapters of book 3, in which he goes on to explain that, after all, he has changed his mind about the terminal date. It was not now to be, in modern terms, 168 B.C., but 146. For his secondary purpose would be to examine how the Romans had used the power that they had gained, and the new terminal point would be the destruction of Carthage and the disaster which happened in Greece in the same year: "the withdrawal of the Macedonians from their alliance with Rome and that of the Lacedaemonians from the Achaean League, and hereupon the beginning and end of the general calamity that overtook Greece."[1]

Artistically, it might be argued that it would have been better to keep to the original plan, to cover the period (221/0–168 B.C.) in which "in not quite fifty-three years all parts of the inhabited world [*oikoumenē*] fell under the single rule [*archē*] of the Romans."[2] The period had been one of rapid evo-

[*] First published in P. Cartledge, P. Garnsey, and E. Gruen, eds., *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History, and Historiography* (Berkeley, 1997), 89–104. I was very grateful to Martin Goodman, Tessa Rajak, and Geza Vermes for various forms of help, guidance, and correction in the preparation of this paper.

1. The "second introduction" occupies bk. 3, 1–5. The passages quoted, from the Loeb translation, are 3, 3, 7–8, and 3, 5, 6.

2. Polybius 1, 1.

lution, and the theme had coherence and dramatic force. As Peter Derow showed some years ago, what Polybius meant by *archē* was not the formation of Roman provinces, but the developing capacity to defeat some peoples or rulers, and to give instructions to others.[3] Both aspects of Roman domination are perfectly exemplified in book 29, which would have formed the original conclusion: the defeat of Perseus at the battle of Pydna, and the famous scene outside Alexandria when the Roman commander, Popilius Laenas, ordered the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes to abandon the siege of the city and go home.[4] Polybius could not of course know that, in historiographical terms, this moment had already acquired a significance even greater than it manifestly had as a historical event. For the author of Daniel had already made it the latest event to be recorded in the Hebrew Bible (11:30): "For the ships of Chittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and return."

The connections and contrasts between Polybius and Daniel are far more profound, however, than this accidental conjunction. In Polybius' conception of history, the Romans were seen as taking their place in a succession of world rulers: first the Persians, then the Spartans, then the Macedonians, and now the Romans (1, 2). Moreover, it was in his originally planned final book, 29, that Polybius included an extended quotation of the reflections of Demetrius of Phalerum, meditating on the destruction of the Persian Empire by Alexander:

> For if you consider not countless years or many generations, but merely the last fifty years, you will read in them the cruelty of Fortune. I ask you, do you think that fifty years ago either the Persians and the Persian king or the Macedonians and the king of Macedon, if some god had foretold the future to them, would ever have believed that at the time when we live, the very name of the Persians would have perished utterly—the Persians who were masters of almost the whole world—and that the Macedonians, whose name was formerly almost unknown, would now be the lords of it all?[5]

The idea that the history of mere "events" was something superficial or insignificant would have amazed Demetrius and his contemporaries in the Greek world, just as it would have surprised later observers in the Near East who reflected on the devastating impact of Alexander's conquests. One such was

3. P. Derow, "Polybius, Rome, and the East," *JRS* 69 (1979): 1–15.

4. Polybius 29, 27.

5. Polybius 29, 21, 3–4, Loeb trans.

the author of 1 Maccabees, writing (almost certainly) some time towards the end of the second century B.C. His work opens as follows:

> And it came to pass after the victory of Alexander the son of Philip the Macedonian, who came from the land of Chittim, that he smote Darius, king of the Persians and Medes, and ruled in his stead, beginning in Greece. He waged many wars and captured strongholds and slew (the) kings of the land. He pressed forward to the ends of the earth and took spoils from a multitude of peoples, and the earth was silent before him, and he was exalted and his heart filled with pride.[6]

We can assume that in Judaea itself Alexander's passage, from Tyre down the coast to Egypt, will have made a corresponding impact. The only detailed narrative reflection of it from a Jewish perspective which we have, however, is a legend, or perhaps better a religious historical novella, which Josephus incorporated in book 11 of his *Antiquities*.[7]

We shall return briefly later to the significance of Josephus' use here of Daniel, which in fact had not yet been written at the time described in *Ant.* 11. It is more important to stress at this point that the still developing corpus of biblical works did incorporate a reasonably complete historical narrative, or series of narratives, relating the impact on the Jewish community of a succession of Near Eastern empires, going back through the Persian Empire of the Achaemenids to the Babylonian and Assyrian empires. To go no further back, the book of Kings contained a historical narrative from the end of King David's reign to the Babylonian Captivity. The two books of Chronicles retold the story from the time of Saul onwards, continuing to a rather brief account of the Captivity, and ending triumphantly with the victory of Cyrus over the Babylonian dynasty (539 B.C.) and the return from the Captivity:

> In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia (KWRŠ MLK PRS)—to fulfil the word of Yahweh through Jeremiah—Yahweh roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it pub-

6. 1 Macc. 1:1. The sequence of tenses in this section is not clear, and the translation is hypothetical. For a basic discussion of 1 Macc., generally thought to be a Greek version of a Hebrew or Aramaic original, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 180–85. A relatively early date of writing, of around 130 B.C., is argued by S. Schwartz, "Israel and the Nations Roundabout: I Maccabees and the Hasmonean Expansion," *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 42 (1991): 1–38.

7. Josephus, *Ant.* 11, 304–47; Loeb trans. of 8, 336. See, e.g., A. D. Momigliano, "Flavius Josephus and Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem," *Athenaeum* 57 (1979): 442–48 = *Settimo contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* (1984), 319–29.

> licly displayed throughout his kingdom: "Cyrus king of Persia says this 'Yahweh, the God of Heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has appointed me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up.' "[8]

As is evident, Chronicles could not have been written as it stands before the Achaemenid period, and it is sometimes argued that it was written, or edited, as late as the early Hellenistic period. The same must apply to the books of Ezra (which begins with a slightly extended version of the same proclamation by Cyrus) and of Nehemiah, which between them relate, within a structure which is chronologically confused and not mutually related as between the two books, the restoration of the Temple and the re-establishment of Jewish worship and observances under the Achaemenids, thus taking the story to some (now indeterminable) point in the fifth century.[9]

An alternative version of the same story (but equally confused in its conception of the sequence of Persian kings) was constructed at some time in the Hellenistic period, using material found also in 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and provides a continuous narrative going from Josiah to Ezra. This is the important and highly puzzling text called 1 Esdras, which may have been composed originally in Hebrew or Aramaic, but certainly existed in Greek by the time of Josephus, who used it for his *Antiquities*.[10]

Its significance in this context is simply as another sign of awareness within Jewish culture of the national tradition as a historical narrative, and as one whose course had been dependent on the attitudes and actions of a succession of external rulers. Such an awareness was quite compatible with a lack of complete clarity as to which ruler had succeeded which, or even as to which empire had been which. It was this sometimes confused impression of a sequence of empires and rulers which provided the framework for a group of three religiously inspired historical novels, one of which, Esther, was to be incorporated in the Hebrew Bible, while Tobit and Judith appeared in the Christian Bible in Greek, which we refer to for convenience as the Septuagint.[11] (In consequence, all three appear in Roman Catholic Bibles, but only

8. 2 Chron. 36:22–23, trans. *New Jerusalem Bible*.

9. See O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament* (1965), 529–30 (Chronicles); 541–42 (Ezra and Nehemiah); H. G. M. Williamson, *The New Century Bible Commentary: 1 and 2 Chronicles* (1982); and by the same author, *World Biblical Commentary* XVI: *Ezra, Nehemiah* (1985).

10. For a detailed survey of the problems, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.2, 708–18.

11. See the fundamental article by M. Hengel, to which I am extremely indebted, "Die

Esther in Protestant ones.) Tobit is set in the Assyrian Empire of the eighth to seventh century. The hero is introduced as one who "in the days of Shalmaneser king of the Assyrian empire was carried away captive out of Thisbe which is on the right hand of Kedesh Naphtali in Upper Galilee." Thenceforward he lived in Nineveh, in the reigns of Shalmaneser (V), Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon (the sequence is historical, if incomplete, the respective dates being 726–722, 704–681, and 680–669 B.C.). The full text of Tobit survives only in Greek, but it is of crucial importance that fragments in Aramaic, with one in Hebrew, have been found in Qumran.[12] The work is thus almost certainly a Semitic-language composition of the early Hellenistic period.

Judith, by contrast, confuses the Assyrian and Babylonian empires: "It was in the twelfth year of Nebuchadnezzar who reigned over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh." The historical Nebuchadnezzar was of course a Babylonian king (see below). There is no trace of the (probable) Semitic original of the Greek text of Judith; and only general arguments from the religious and nationalistic tone of the story of Judith and Holofernes might perhaps suggest that it *could* belong in the Maccabean period.[13]

As for Esther, if we ignore an inept introductory paragraph added to the Greek version, which confuses the Persian and Babylonian empires (as does indeed a reference to Esther's father in 2:5–6), it is firmly set in the Persian Empire, in the reign of a king 'ḤŠWRWŠ (Ahasuerus-Artaxerxes), who ruled from Susa over an empire which stretched from India to Kush, and who had an army of Persians and Medes (ḤYL PRS WMDY). The whole story of Esther is retold in detail by Josephus in the *Antiquities*, where it is set in the fifth century.[14] As a literary work, it was certainly in existence by the second century B.C. at the latest. A note at the end of the Greek version claims that one Dositheos had "brought" the letter concerning Purim (described in 9:20–22) in the fourth year of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, after it had been translated by Lysimachus, a Jerusalemite. If this reference is authentic, and not merely a piece of pseudo-historical colouring, the date referred to

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Septuaginta als 'christliche Schriftensammlung': Ihre Vorgeschichte und das Problem ihres Kanons," in M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer, eds., *Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum* (1994), 182–284.

12. For Tobit, see R. H. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* I (1913), 174–75; P. Deselaers, *Das Buch Tobit* (1982); Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 222–23. For Qumran fragments 4Q196–200, see now J. A. Fitzmyer, *Qumran Cave 4*, XIV: *Parabiblical Texts*, part 2, DJD XIX (1995), 1–76.

13. See Charles (n. 12), 174–75; Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 585–86; Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 216–17.

14. Josephus, *Ant*. 11, 184–296.

is 88/7 B.C. There are no known fragments from Qumran, making this the only book of the Hebrew Bible not represented there.[15]

The establishment of the feast of Purim thus was, or was made into, the central point of this vivid court narrative, and this feature is reflected clearly in 2 Maccabees, surely written in the second half of the second century B.C. This book ends with the defeat of the Seleucid general Nicanor in 161 B.C., and the decision to celebrate the "day of Nicanor" on the thirteenth of Adar, on the day before "the day of Mordechai": "the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—it is called Adar in the Syrian language—one day before the day of Mordechai."[16] Purim was thus already established as a festival and was already associated with the story of Esther, Haman, and Mordechai. Esther is thus (perhaps) roughly contemporary with Daniel, or might be as much as a couple of centuries earlier. It shares with Daniel the use of history, and the deployment of an alien court as a stage for the demonstration of Jewish piety.

The Book of Daniel

These varied works, for all the problems of date, authorship, intention, and original language which they present, are enough to set the framework for Daniel, and to suggest the way in which the successive Near Eastern empires, and the relationship of the Jewish community to them, could be used in Jewish historical and semi-historical works of the late Achaemenid and earlier Hellenistic period, in ways which ranged from sequential narratives of events to colourful and improving historical novels.

As will be obvious, this paper will make no attempt even to indicate all the problems which surround Daniel: the question, for instance, of whether there had been earlier versions before the (indisputable) redaction of the canonical Hebrew and Aramaic text in the 160s B.C.; the meanings intended by the anonymous author to be attached to the symbols incorporated in the dreams and visions which it recounts; whether even after the 160s variant "Daniel" texts were in circulation; the dates and origins of the two established Greek versions; and the interpretation of the text in the New Testament, in Josephus, by Christian commentators, such as Hippolytus and Jerome, or by Daniel's brilliant pagan commentator, Porphyry. All that is intended here is to set out the most elementary facts, and then to present an

15. For Esther, see Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament*, 505–6, and 591–92 (the additions). For the additions, see also Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.2, 718–19.

16. 2 Macc. 15:36.

analysis of the structure of the text that will show just how detailed a use it makes of Near Eastern history from the sixth century up to the 160s B.C.

As for the date and context of the canonical Daniel as we have it, no serious commentator would now question Porphyry's demonstration that the work belongs in the 160s under Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and that up to and including that point the prophecies in it are pseudo-prophecies, relating and giving meaning to events which had already occurred. At the time when the author was completing the work, the imposition of the "abomination of desolation" in 167 had occurred, and the restoration of the Temple cult in 164 had not.[17] The "reception" of Daniel is a topic which could take many volumes and is integral to early Christianity, in particular to the notion of Jesus as a "Son of Man" (see briefly text to n. 29 below). But it may be noted that stories which form part of "our" Daniel are alluded to in 1 Maccabees, which (as above) dates to the later second century B.C., or (less probably) to the early first. In the "testament of Mattathias" in 1 Macc. 2, recounting historical examples of pious Jews, there appear (2:59) Ananias, Azarias, and Misael saved from the furnace (cf. Daniel 3); and (2:60) Daniel saved from the lion (cf. Daniel 6). Similar allusions appear in 3 Maccabees (perhaps of the first century B.C.) and 4 Maccabees (probably of the first century A.D.).[18]

Much more important still is the fact that actual fragments of the canonical Daniel (as well as other Daniel-like prophetic fragments) are known from Qumran and would thus count among the textual attestations from the ancient world which are closest in time to the original composition.[19]

17. For the essential treatments and bibliography, see R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (1929); L. F. Hartman and A. A. De Lella, *The Book of Daniel, Anchor Bible* 23 (1978); Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 245–46; and now the massive commentary by J. J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (1993). Note also E. Bickerman, *Four Strange Books of the Bible: Jonah, Daniel, Koheleth, Esther* (1987), and A. S. van der Woude, ed., *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (1993). In this latter collection, note esp. M. Delcor, "L'histoire selon le livre de Daniel, notamment au chapitre 11," 365–86, and C. C. Caragounis, "History and Supra-history: Daniel and the Four Empires," 387–97.

18. 3 Macc. 6 (the prayer of Eleazar): section 6 (three companions in Babylonia saved from furnace); and 7 (Daniel saved from lion). See J. H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* II (1985), 509. Cf. 4 Macc. 13:9; 16:3; 16:21; 18:3. See E. Bickerman, "The Date of Fourth Maccabees," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* I (1976), 276ff., and Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* II, 531–32.

19. See E. Ulrich, "Daniel Manuscripts from Qumran I," *BASOR* 268 (1987): 17–37; "II," *BASOR* 274 (1989): 3–26. Final publication by the same author in *Qumran Cave 4* XI, DJD XVI (2000), 4Q112–4Q116 (= 4QDan^{a-e}); see also *Qumran Cave 1*, DJD I (1955), appen-

The earliest of the Daniel fragments from Qumran Cave IV covers sections of chapters 10–11, and is thought to date from the late second century B.C., thus only some half a century after the composition of these chapters. The fragments also confirm that the shift from Hebrew to Aramaic and back characteristic of the canonical Daniel (2:4b–7:28 is in Aramaic, the rest in Hebrew) was already present in the texts circulating in the late Hellenistic period. At some point which remains open to debate two different Greek translations were made, one of which came to be that which formed part of Christian *codices* of the Bible and is therefore labelled as the Septuagint text—quite unhistorically, since the legendary account of the translation carried out by seventy-two elders under Ptolemy Philadelphus related only to the five books of Moses, and at that time (the third century B.C.) the canonical Daniel had not been written. The other is that ascribed to Theodotion, alleged to have worked in the second century A.D. But a text which was at any rate close to his is quoted by writers of the first century A.D. In particular, a "pre-Theodotion" version seems to lie behind some passages in the New Testament.[20] But it is futile to try to see the earliest history of the translation of Daniel into Greek in terms of specific and distinct "versions" represented in later manuscripts. For by far the most important known user of the Greek Daniel is Josephus, in book 10 of the *Antiquities*, written in Rome in the 80s A.D.[21] His paraphrase of Daniel incorporates readings which are shared with either the "Septuagint" text or the "Theodotion" one, or with neither.[22]

It is in fact not unlikely that Daniel had been translated into Greek, per-

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dix, nos. 71–72 (= 1QDan^{a-b}), and *Les petites grottes de Qumran*, DJD III (1962), 114–16 (6Q7 = 6PapDan). Note in particular the Aramaic "son of God" fragment, discussed by G. Vermes in "Qumran Forum Miscellanea I," *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 43 (1992): 299–305, on 301–3; translated in G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*^{4} (1995), 331–32.

20. For these questions, which I do not attempt to go into further, see M. Harl, G. Dorival, and O. Munnich, *La Bible grecque des Septante* (1988), and the important article by M. Hengel, "Die Septuaginta" (n. 11). I was very grateful to Tessa Rajak for allowing me to see the text of her unpublished Grinfield Lecture on the Septuagint, Oxford University, 1996: "The Jewish Reception of the LXX in the First and Second Centuries A.D.: Some Thoughts on Josephus and LXX Daniel."

21. *Ant.* 10, 186–218; 11, 229–81. See G. Vermes, "Josephus' Treatment of the Book of Daniel," *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 47 (1991): 149–66, and S. Mason, "Josephus, Daniel and the Flavian House," in F. Parente and J. Sievers, eds., *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period* (1994), 161–91.

22. See J. Ziegler, ed., *Susanna, Daniel: Bel et Draco* (Göttingen Septuagint XVI.2, 1954), 22. As does Rahlfs in his standard edition, Ziegler prints both texts.

haps more than once, as early as the later Hellenistic period, as we know was the case with Esther (text to nn. 14–15 above) and with the Wisdom of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus).[23] But all we can be certain of is that it was in circulation in Hebrew and Aramaic by the end of the second century B.C. and in Greek also by the first century A.D.

Josephus, as we saw earlier in relation to Alexander's legendary visit to Jerusalem (text to n. 7 above), accepted "Daniel" as a historical personage of the sixth century B.C. living under the Babylonian Captivity, and hence treated his dreams and visions as genuinely prophetic. He thus equally took the references in Daniel to Antiochus Epiphanes as prophetic, and also understood the prophetic element as including the Roman Empire. Whether Josephus interpreted Daniel as specifically foretelling the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 is, unfortunately, unclear, owing to a problem in the text. According to a possible reconstruction of his text, Josephus wrote as follows:

> And there would arise from their number a certain king who would make war on the Jewish nation and their laws, deprive them of the form of government based on these laws, spoil the temple and prevent the sacrifices from being offered for three years. And these misfortunes our nation did in fact come to experience under Antiochus Epiphanes, just as Daniel many years before saw and wrote that they would happen. In the same manner Daniel also wrote about the empire of the Romans and that [Jerusalem would be taken by them and] the temple would be laid waste.[24]

Josephus' recognition that Daniel did indeed speak about Antiochus Epiphanes is however quite unambiguous, and he reverts to this point (which is not in his main source, 1 Maccabees) when he comes to relate Antiochus' desecration of the Temple in 167 B.C.: "Now the desecration of the temple came about in accordance with the prophecy of Daniel, which had been made four hundred and eight years before; for he had revealed that the Macedonians would destroy it."[25] He thus supplied nearly all the evidence for Porphyry's correct deduction that this prophecy was a pseudo-prophecy, but of course without drawing this conclusion himself.[26]

23. See the Wisdom of Ben Sira, prol. 27–30. The year is 132 B.C.

24. Josephus, *Ant.* 10, 275–76, Loeb trans. The words bracketed are supplied only from John Chrysostom, *Adv. Iudaeos* 5, 8 (Migne, *PG* XLVIII, col. 897). See R. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (1983), esp. 134–35.

25. *Ant.* 12, 322, Loeb trans.

26. Porphyry's argument is preserved in Jerome's *Commentary on Daniel*, *Corpus Christ.*

Daniel: Narrative Structure

It was a pseudo-prophecy, however, and Daniel does preserve for us a unique representation, written in the mid-Hellenistic period, of how Jewish piety and religious knowledge had been deployed under a series of foreign empires, Babylonian, Persian, and Macedonian, over a period of four hundred years. The following tabulation makes no attempt to go into interpretative details, but is concerned to do two things: to make clear the literary structure of the work, which means primarily the relationship between "authorial voice" (first person and third person), narrative, and interpretation; and to set out summarily the real identities and dates of the rulers to whom the work refers.[27]

It will be seen that in form and character the work divides into four distinct sections. In section (1), covering chapters 1–6, a series of narratives, in the third person, with no identified narrator, and designed to demonstrate the operation of Jewish piety, are interspersed with dreams and portents external to Daniel, which are then provided with interpretations by him. In section (2), covering chapters 7–10—or perhaps better chapters 7–8, with chapters 9–10 forming a sort of transition to (3)—Daniel himself has very detailed prophetic dreams, occasionally described in the third person (7:1; 10:1), but related by him in the first person, whose interpretation, in even greater detail, is supplied first by an anonymous figure to whom he turns (7:16), and then by Gabriel (8:17). Chapters 9–10 move on to prayers by Daniel and to exchanges between Gabriel and Daniel, both related by Daniel in the first person. Section (3) covers 11:1–34, and contains a continuous series of historical prophecies addressed to Daniel by an angelic being who is not specifically named (11:1: W'TH 'MT 'GYD LK / *καὶ νῦν ἀλήθειαν ἀναγγελῶ σοι* [Theodotion]—"and now I will declare to you the truth"). The literary structure of this section is quite different, in that there is no division between the material and its interpretation. The narrative, interspersed with interpretation and comment by the same speaker, covers nearly four centuries, from the beginning of the Achaemenid period to the middle of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Lat. LXXVA, 771; the relevant passage is reproduced and translated in Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 464A.

27. For these identifications, and the historical framework in general, see Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East, c. 3000–330 B.C.* I–II (1995). Volume II covers, among other things, the Neo-Assyrian Empire (chap. 9), Babylonia, ca. 900–539 (chap. 11), and the Achaemenid Empire (chap. 13).

Finally, there is section (4), covering 11:35 to the end of chapter 12, the only truly prophetic part of the whole work, which looks forward, in very significant style, to events which really had not yet occurred (and never did). In literary structure, however, this section is continuous with (3) and is also placed in the mouth of the same angelic being.

Section (1)

Chapter	*Narrative; dreams and visions*	*Interpretations*
1	Capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (II) of Babylon (604–562 B.C.). Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah selected for court service. They refuse royal rations. This continues to "first year of Cyrus" (539 B.C.).	
2	Year "2" of Nebuchadnezzar. His dream.	Daniel interprets dream: image of gold, silver, brass, iron; indicates four successive kingdoms, to be followed by eternal kingdom.
3	Nebuchadnezzar sets up golden image. Hananiah (Shedrach), Mishael (Meshach), and Azariah (Abednego) refuse to worship. Placed in furnace, saved. Nebuchadnezzar orders all to respect their God.	
4	Nebuchadnezzar's dream of tree (related in first person).	Daniel interprets: dream portends Nebuchadnezzar's expulsion from kingdom, to live in fields.
	Nebuchadnezzar is expelled and then restored, and worships God (related in third, then first, person).	
5	Feast of Belshazzar, "son" of Nebuchadnezzar (= Bel-shar-uṣur, ruling in Babylon as "royal prince" in the absence of his father, Nabonidus [555–539 B.C.]). Vessels from Temple used. Writing on the wall.	

Section (1) (*continued*)

Chapter	*Narrative; dreams and visions*	*Interpretations*
		Daniel interprets writing: kingdom to be given to Medes and Persians (MDY WPRS).
	Belshazzar killed. Kingdom taken by "Darius the Mede" (in fact by Cyrus, 539 B.C.).	
6	Darius forbids prayer to man or god, except himself. Daniel prays all the same. Thrown to lions, saved. Darius orders observance of Daniel's God. Daniel prospers in reign of Darius (I?) (522–486 B.C.) and Cyrus (539/30 B.C.).	

Section (2)

7	Daniel's dream of four beasts; 4th beast with 10 horns, and 11th which destroys 3 of others. Day of judgement. Beast (4th?) slain. Reign of one "like a son of man" (KBR 'NŠ, 7:13).	
		Interpretation given *to* Daniel by unnamed person (7:16). Four kings/kingdoms. 10 kings of 4th kingdom. Persecution by 11th. Dominion to be given to "the people of the saints of the most high" ('MQDYŠY 'LYWNYN, 7:27).
8	Daniel's dream (in "year 3 of Belshazzar"). Ram, defeated by goat from west. His horn broken, and replaced by four horns. From one of them comes little horn, who magnifies himself, and destroys daily sacrifice (TMYD, 8:11) and sanctuary.	
		Interpretation given *to* Daniel, by Gabriel (named in 8:17): ram is king of Media and Persia (MDY WPRS); goat is king of Greece (MLK

Section (2) (*continued*)

Chapter	*Narrative; dreams and visions*	*Interpretations*
		YWN) (Alexander, 336–323 B.C.). Four kingdoms. Then persecuting king (Antiochus Epiphanes, 175–164 B.C.).
9	Daniel's vision (in year 1 of Darius "son of Ahasuerus" (DRYWŠ BN 'ḤŠWRWŠ) (522 B.C.? Or Darius II, 423–405 B.C.?); he understands Jeremiah's prediction of 70-year desolation of Jerusalem. Daniel's prayer. Gabriel appears to Daniel, predicts cessation of sacrifice and offering, and imposition of "abomination of desolation" (ŠQWṢYM MŠMM / *βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων*, 9:27).	
10	Year 3 of Cyrus king of Persia (KWRŠ MLK PRS) (537 B.C.?). Daniel's vision of angel (not named), and then of (different?) person "like a son of man" (KDMWT BNY 'DM, 10:16; cf. 7:13). Latter announces prophecy, "what is written in the book of truth" (BKTB 'MT, 10:21).	

Section (3)

Chapter	*Verse*	*Narrative*
11	1–2	The same person (angel?) prophesies course of events from Darius "the Mede" (or Cyrus, as in LXX and "Theodotion"). Three more kings in Persia (LPRS). Fourth (Xerxes, 486–465 B.C.?) will attack "all the kingdom of Greece" (HKL 'T MLKWT YWN).
	3	Mighty king will arise (Alexander).
	4	Kingdom divided into four (early Hellenistic monarchies).
	5	Strength of "king of south" (MLK HNGB) (Ptolemy I, 306–285 B.C.).
	6	Marriage of daughter of "king of south" to "king of north" (MLK HṢPWN). Marriage breaks down. (Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, marries Antiochus II Theos, c. 252 B.C.)

Section (3) (*continued*)

Chapter	*Verse*	*Narrative*
	7–8	Invasion by "king of south." Spoils carried to Egypt (MṢRYM). (Ptolemy III Euergetes, 247–222 B.C., and Third Syrian War, 246–241 B.C.; for spoils, cf. Adoulis inscription, 238 B.C., *OGIS* 54; Canopus decree, *OGIS* 56.)
	11–12	Victory of "king of south" over "king of north." (Ptolemy IV defeats Antiochus III at Raphia, 217 B.C.)
	13–17	Conquests by "king of north." (Conquest of Coele Syria and Palestine by Antiochus III, 202/1–200 B.C.)
	17	Marriage alliance between kings. (Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus III, marries Ptolemy V Epiphanes, 194/3 B.C.)
	18	(King of north) turns to isles. Frustrated. ([?] Antiochus III, in Asia Minor, Greece, conflict with Rome, defeat at Magnesia, treaty of Apamea, 190–188 B.C.)
	19	Return; death. (Death of Antiochus III in Elymais, 187 B.C.)
	20	His successor, death of. (Seleucus IV Philopator, 187–175 B.C.)
	21–34	"King of north" invades kingdom of south, returns, action against holy covenant. Second invasion, stopped by "ships of Kittim" (ṢYYM KTYM, 11, 30). Action against sanctuary, suppression of daily sacrifice (TMYD), imposition of the "abomination of desolation" (ŠQWṢ MŠMM / *βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεων*). Resistance begins. [Antiochus IV Epiphanes, 175–164 B.C. Invasion of Egypt, 170/169 B.C. Second invasion, 168 B.C., stopped by Roman emissary, Popilius Laenas. Suppression of Temple cult, 167 B.C. Maccabean revolt begins.]

Section (4)

	35–45	Prophecies of prospective last part of Antiochus' reign.
12	1–3	Prophecy of appearance of angel Michael, delivery of Israel. Resurrection and Day of Judgement.
	4	End of vision.
	5–13	Daniel reports final vision and message.
	11	From cessation of daily sacrifice (TMYD) and imposition of "abomination of desolation" (ŠQWṢ ŠMM / *τὸ βδέλυγμα [τῆς] ἐρημώσεως*) for 1,290 days.

Conclusion: Daniel and History

Many aspects of the text of Daniel, heavily loaded with often enigmatic symbols and with religious meaning, have an important place in the history of Judaism and Christianity. It is only necessary to note, firstly, the earliest unambiguous appearance in Jewish literature of the notions of a day of judgement and of the resurrection of the virtuous (12:2: "Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting disgrace").[28] Secondly, there is the (highly enigmatic) symbolism of the one "like a son of man" (KBR 'NŠ) seen "coming on the clouds of heaven" (7:13–14), whose relevance to New Testament imagery is obvious.[29]

My concern here is however only to stress, firstly, how closely integrated the various sections of Daniel are one with another, and to suggest how profoundly they are related to the Maccabean crisis. Cyrus is mentioned already in 1:21, and the Medes and Persians appear first in 5:28, while the Hellenistic monarchies and Antiochus Epiphanes are mentioned already in chapters 7–8. In chapter 9 we have the first of three appearances (9:27; 11:31; 12:11) of the suppression of the daily sacrifice in the Temple (TMYD), and the imposition of the "abomination of desolation." Equally important, even the earlier part of the work is dominated by concerns over the personal observation of Judaism, concerns which it is tempting to interpret as reflecting the strains imposed by the persecution under Antiochus from 167 B.C. onwards, which was noteworthy for being directed not only at the Temple cult, but at the private observance of Judaism.[30] Hence there are references to the avoidance of unclean food (chapter 1); the worship of pagan gods (chapter 3); and the offering of prayers to deities, or supposed deities (chapter 6). In spite of the drastic successive shifts in "authorial voice," literary form, and narrative structure which characterise this quite brief work, it may be suggested that in its conceptions and concerns it can be seen as a unity, and one which reflects the great crisis of the 160s.

28. See G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (1972); E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 B.C.E.–66 C.E.* (1992), 298–99.

29. See, e.g., M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to Gospels and Acts*[3] (1967), app. E (G. Vermes); G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (1973), 160–61; Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 488–89; C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (1982); J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (1991), 337–38.

30. For my view of this, see "The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's 'Judaism and Hellenism,' " *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 29 (1978): 1–21 (= chapter 4 of the present volume).

For historians of the classical world, however, what is most distinctive and significant about Daniel is the representation, through the medium of narratives, dreams, and prophecies, of a succession of Near Eastern empires, in steadily increasing detail and accuracy, from the Neo-Babylonian Empire through Achaemenid Persia to Alexander, and then to the Seleucids and Ptolemies. Viewed literally, there are in these representations various mistakes, misidentifications, and transpositions. But, taken as a series, the picture presented by Daniel is indeed that which Momigliano argued should be seen as a borrowing from the Greek world, namely the notion of history as a succession of world empires.[31] In terms of the subsequent history of the world the issues which were stirred up by Antiochus' persecution and the Maccabean counter-revolution, and which gave rise to the composition of the book of Daniel as we have it, had a significance far greater than any other aspects of the Hellenistic period. For it was in the persecution of the 160s and the resistance to it that Jewish monotheism, its sacrificial cult, and the personal observances required of its adherents faced and survived their greatest test. But even as regards ancient political history, and the representation in literature of the successive regimes which had claimed domination over the peoples of the Near East, Daniel can add a dimension, and the sense of a longer perspective, which even Polybius was not in a position to attach to those drastic swings of fortune which took place in 168 B.C., the year at which his great *History* had originally been intended to end. But, as history, Daniel's brief and allusive representations of selected episodes, taken largely out of context, and seen from a very precise and limited viewpoint, cannot of course compare with Polybius' profound conception of how events in different parts of the *oikoumenē* (inhabited world) had come to be interlinked, and to form a single causative sequence. For an understanding of Hellenistic history we will still depend on Polybius, and on his greatest modern interpreter.

31. See A. D. Momigliano, "The Origins of Universal History," *Ann. Sc. N. Sup. Pisa*, ser. 3, 12.2 (1982): 533–60 = *On Pagans, Jews and Christians* (1987), 31–57.

CHAPTER FOUR

*The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's "Judaism and Hellenism"**

Introduction

The truism that important events are understood best when considered at some distance in time may serve as an excuse for surveying only so belatedly the vast contribution to Jewish and Hellenistic history made by Hengel's major work, first published in German in 1969, revised and enlarged in 1973, and issued in an English translation in 1974.[1] If some alternative perspectives are suggested in what follows, and some doubts expressed about the central concept of a Hellenistic reform movement on the part of a group within the Jewish community, that implies no lack of admiration or gratitude for what is, along with P. M. Fraser's *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (1972), the most important contribution to the history of the Hellenistic world since M. I. Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History* (1941). More specifically, as a study of the interaction of Judaism and Hellenism, it has been rivalled in recent years only by the great work of Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* I–III (1974–84),[2] and by the penetrating essay of A. D. Momigliano in chapters 4–5 of *Alien Wisdom* (1975). In looking back on Hengel, it will be possible to take this and other subsequent work into account; but the im-

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1. M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* I–II (1974), henceforth Hengel. Cf. also his *Juden, Griechen und Barbaren: Aspekte der Hellenisierung des Judentums in vorchristlicher Zeit* (1976).

2. See Tessa Rajak, "The Unknown God," *JJS* 28 (1977): 20–29.

portant task is to try to sum up Hengel's achievement, and to ask from what different perspectives we might approach the events of the 160s—which on any view were fundamental to the future of Judaism, and hence of Christianity and Islam. If there ever was an identifiable "turning point in history" it was the years 167 to 164 B.C. in Palestine.

Hengel's Interpretation

It is the essential characteristic of Hengel's approach that, in spite of the immense historical learning and real historical understanding employed in it, his thesis is that of a Christian theologian: that the early Hellenistic period saw a significant process of mutual assimilation and comprehension between Judaism and paganism, which was brought to a halt by the nationalistic reaction under the Maccabees, and was only resumed and brought to fruition in the preaching of Christianity to gentiles. To arrive at this conclusion Hengel starts (6–106) with a survey of Hellenistic political, administrative, economic, and cultural influences in Palestine which represents one of the best studies of any region of the Hellenistic world. It would not be possible to point to any general survey of a similar quality for Anatolia, Syria proper, Babylonia, or Egypt. The conclusion (103–6) is that Palestinian Judaism was as much a "Hellenistic" Judaism as that of the diaspora.

From there Hengel moves to Greek influence on the Jewish literature and philosophy of the Hellenistic period, and to movements within Judaism which he takes as being in reaction to this, the growth of hasidism and apocalyptic and the emergence of Essenism—which itself, in his view, had Hellenistic features. The final section, on the Hellenistic re-interpretation of Judaism and the reform attempt, begins, perhaps surprisingly, with literary evidence for Greek views, starting with Hecataeus of Abdera, of the Jews as a species of philosophers; it then moves to the (very slight) evidence for *Jewish* identifications of the Jewish God with the supreme God (Zeus or Dis) worshipped by the pagans; indeed the evidence from the Hellenistic period is confined precisely to two *Alexandrian* writers, Aristobulus and the author of the *Letter of Aristeas*. Finally, Hengel comes to a sketch of the reform movement of 175–164 itself and an attempt, following E. Bickermann, *Der Gott der Makkabäer* (1937), to identify the ideology of the reforms and the nature of the cult briefly established in the Temple. It is the fact, which Hengel of course clearly admits (303), that we cannot securely establish the nature of this cult which is the fundamental weakness of the book's main thesis. For we do *not* know, though we may wish to argue, that it was in any sense syn-

cretistic. The evidence is perfectly compatible with the possibility that it was quite simply a pagan cult.

We may postpone this question in order to look first at some other aspects of this complex series of events. Firstly, Hengel considers only briefly (294–97) the parallels afforded by other Semitic deities and their identification with Greek gods. More significantly, he does not consider Hellenistic influences on the Jews as part of the much wider, and in many respects obscure and mysterious, process of the fusion of cultures in the whole south Syrian region. But it would only be if we could understand their immediate neighbours, the Phoenicians, Samaritans, Idumaeans, Nabataeans, and the (presumably) Aramaic-speaking peoples of Transjordan and southern Syria that we could begin to ask how distinctive the Jews were, and what if any type of fusion with Hellenism could have been expected of them. Though the book of course contains references to the cultures of these peoples, they do not serve to provide a perspective for it. In the next section an attempt will be made to sketch some possible contributions of this perspective.

An incomparably more glaring omission is that Hengel does not attempt to portray the ordinary, day-to-day Judaism and its practises which the reforms set out to transform or abolish: "his book really deals with the Hellenization of an unknown entity."[3] Momigliano's phrase justly characterises the book (and also Hengel's *Juden, Griechen und Barbaren*), but not the state of our knowledge. The subsequent section ("The Jewish Community in the Early Hellenistic Period") will sum up briefly some aspects of the structure and nature of the Jewish community in the early Hellenistic period. Even a slight sketch will show how un-Hellenistic it was and remained, in political institutions, in observances, and in its culture and literary products.

One fact on which some suggestions will need to be made is the relation of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kings to the high priesthood. Here too it is a weakness of Hengel's book that, again following Bickermann, he accepts with only cursory discussion (283–87) the unimportance of the role of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. But even if (as is beyond question) the initiatives taken by the Hellenisers were of fundamental importance, it remains the case that the interruption of the Temple cult and the prohibition of Jewish observances were enforced by royal orders and carried out by royal employees.

3. A. D. Momigliano, in his review in *JThS* 21 (1970): 149–53 = *Quinto Contributo alla storia degli studi classicia del mondo antico* (1974), 931–36; for a further perspective, cf. his "J. G. Droyser between Greeks and Jews," *History and Theory* 9 (1970): 139–53 = *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (1977), 307–23.

We cannot avoid returning ("Antiochus Epiphanes and Judaism," below) to the question of whether Antiochus had a "policy" of his own, and if so why and to what end.

But the central question remains (last section but one): what was the nature of the cult or cults observed in the Temple between 167 and 164 B.C.? We can understand (more or less) the nature of the faith which triumphed in the Maccabean revolution. If we do not understand exactly what was the nature of the cult which was supposed to replace it, it would be better to say so, and not to build vast historical interpretations on hypotheses as to matters of fact.

Greek and Native Cultures in the Syrian Region

As mentioned above, only new evidence could improve Hengel's portrayal of Hellenism in Judaea itself. One such item is indeed the bilingual ostracon from Khirbet el-Kôm, between Hebron and Lachish, with brief Aramaic and Greek texts acknowledging a loan.[4] This third-century B.C. text (probably of 277 B.C.) is notable as the earliest Greek document from Palestine, as attesting the loan-word *QPYLS*, from the Greek *kapelos*, a trader, and as a perfect exemplification of the commercial influences which Hengel emphasises.

But for a fuller understanding of the phenomena of Hellenism in Palestine we need a wider perspective. Firstly, it is noticeable that on the fringes of the Syrian region, in Nabataea and Palmyra, flourishing mixed cultures could grow up in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, employing both Greek and dialects of Aramaic in their public documents, exhibiting exotic and magnificent variants of Greek architecture, and observing cults in which Greek elements intermingled with indigenous ones.[5] In Syria proper, notably at Hierapolis/Bambyce and at Heliopolis/Baalbek, it is notorious that there survived within Greek cities temples and cults which both were, and were perceived at the time to be, entirely non-Greek in origin and character. The obvious instance is Lucian's description in *On the Syrian Goddess* of the cult of Atargatis/Hera at Hierapolis, with references to that of Melqart/Hercules at Tyre and to cults at Heliopolis (which he thought to be of Egyptian origin), Byblos, and Apheca. Similarly, when Herodian comes to

4. L. T. Geraty, "The Khirbet el-Kôm Bilingual Ostracon," *BASOR* 220 (1975): 55–61; cf. A. Skaist, "A Note on the Bilingual Ostracon from Khirbet el-Kom," *IEJ* 28 (1978): 106–8.

5. For Nabataea, see, e.g., the brief survey and bibliography in Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, app. 2; and P. C. Hammond, *The Nabataeans: Their History, Culture and Archaeology* (1973). For Palmyra see M. A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (1976).

describe the coup d'état which brought to the imperial power in A.D. 218 a great-nephew of Septimius Severus through his Syrian wife Julia Domna, he gives a perfect description of a non-Greek cult as preserved at Emesa and integrated in the life of Greek Syria:

> Both boys (the pretender and his cousin) were dedicated to the service of the sun god whom the local inhabitants worship under its Phoenician name of Elagabalus. There was a huge temple built there, richly ornamented with gold and silver and valuable stones. The cult extended not just to the local inhabitants either. Satraps of all the adjacent territories and barbarian princes tried to outdo each other in sending costly dedications to the god every year. *There was no actual man-made statue of the god, the sort Greeks and Romans put up*; but there was an enormous stone, rounded at the base and coming to a point at the top, conical in shape and black. This stone is worshipped as if it were sent from heaven; on it there are some small projecting pieces and markings that are pointed out, which the people would like to believe are a rough picture of the sun, because this is how they see them. Bassianus, the elder of the two boys, was a priest of this god. . . . He used to appear in public in barbarian clothes, wearing a long-sleeved "chiton" that hung to his feet and was gold and purple. His legs from the waist down to the tips of his toes were completely covered similarly with garments ornamented with gold and purple. On his head he wore a crown of precious stones glowing with different colours.[6]

We could not ask for a better model of how the high priest of an aniconic cult in the city of Jerusalem might have appeared to a Greek observer if the hypothetical transformation had taken place, and the cult preserved in its ancestral form but integrated into that of a Supreme God compatible with the pantheon of Graeco-Roman paganism. The fact that (rightly or wrongly) Herodian perceived the cult in the inland city of Emesa as "Phoenician" is also significant, for two main reasons. Firstly, the Phoenician cities are the clearest examples of pre-Greek cities which retained their traditions and identities while also becoming integrated in the Hellenistic and Roman world.[7] Phoenician inscriptions continue until the reign of Augustus, Phoenician lettering on the coins of Tyre until towards the end of the second century A.D.

6. Herodian 5, 3, 3–6, trans. C. R. Whittaker in the Loeb ed. For the cult, see *RAC*, s.v. "Elagabal." For Emesa, H. Seyrig, "Caractères de l'histoire d'Emèse," *Syria* 36 (1959): 184–92.

7. See "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 209 (1983): 54–71 (= chapter 2 in the present volume).

Without our entering here on the complex problems involved, it is enough to say that Philon of Byblos at the beginning of the second century A.D. claimed to have translated the work of an ancient Phoenician, Sanchuniathon, on the Phoenician cults, and that his translation was used by Porphyry of Tyre in the third century and then by Eusebius of Caesarea. Not only, therefore, was there a continuity of cults, with much assimilation to Greek deities, but also (however slight) a continuous literary tradition.[8] Moreover Eusebius, perhaps quoting Porphyry, can confirm the accuracy of the literary tradition by reference to still-existing cult practices: the testimony of the ancient *theologi* drew confirmation "from the nomenclature of the gods still applied to this day in the cities and villages in Phoenicia and the interpretation given to the mysteries celebrated among each people."[9]

Secondly, not only did these now Graeco-Phoenician cities continue to exercise, as they always had, a cultural influence on Judaea (most aptly symbolised by the exclusive use of Tyrian shekels for the Temple dues), but communities inland in the immediate neighbourhood of Judaea tended to identify themselves as Phoenician, or rather "Sidonian." The best documented case, well discussed by Hengel (43, 62) is that of the community which in the second century B.C. described themselves, in Greek, as "the Sidonians in Marisa," in Idumaea. The second instance presents crucial difficulties, all the more so because, as we shall see, it is the cornerstone of the entire interpretation of the "reform movement" as understood by Bickermann and Hengel.

2 Maccabees 6:1–2 tells us that Antiochus sent an emissary to profane the Temple of Jerusalem and dedicate it to Zeus Olympius, and that of Mount Gerizim to Zeus Xenius, "as those who dwelt in the place requested." Josephus, who did not use 2 Maccabees, appears to present us with the petition itself,[10] in which they claim to be Sidonians, unrelated to the Jews, and ask for their temple to be known as that of Zeus Hellenius; and also with the king's instruction to his agent, referring to them as "the Sidonians in Shechem." All would be well if we could, with Momigliano, be confident that this and the book of Daniel represent the "only two certain pieces of contemporary evidence for the religious situation of the persecution period."[11] That may indeed be so. But we have to reckon with the fact that the only source for

8. The evidence, which demands further study, is summarily collected in F. Millar, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria," *JRS* 61 (1971): 1–17, on 5–6 (= chapter 10 of the present volume).

9. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 1, 10, 55 = F. Jacoby, *FGrH* 790 F. 4 (55).

10. *Ant.* 12, 257–64.

11. *Alien Wisdom*, 108.

the document is not itself contemporary. Furthermore, Josephus quotes it explicitly as evidence for a thesis which he has put forward earlier,[12] that the Samaritans claimed or denied relationship to the Jews according to the advantages of the moment. Thirdly, there is no other evidence recording either a reversion of the Samaritan Temple to its original cult after the end of persecution or its continuance as a temple of Zeus Xenius or Hellenius until its destruction by John Hyrcanus.

A substantial doubt must therefore remain. But 2 Maccabees at least attests the fact of a petition for the transformation of the cult on Mount Gerizim; and we have the independent evidence of Pseudo-Eupolemus, perhaps writing in the second century B.C., who explains "Argarizin" as "mountain of (the) Highest" (*hypsistos*):[13] "Zeus Hypsistos," being, as is well known, a possible way of referring to the Jewish God in the Graeco-Roman period. We still cannot be certain of course what Pseudo-Eupolemus himself implied by this, or whether his view was shared by those who worshipped there. However, we have a considerable body of evidence, admittedly from varying regions of Syria and varying dates, which clearly shows that indigenous cults could be preserved and integrated with their now Hellenised environment without losing their identity or continuity. What is more, a study of the Semitic cults of the Syrian region, and in particular of private dedications, whether in Greek or in dialects of Aramaic, argues that the evidence reflects a growth of the conception of a single supreme god, addressed in various names.[14] If this evidence will require further consideration, it is still clear that, *if* the cult in Jerusalem were sufficiently similar to the native cults persisting elsewhere in the Syrian region, it might have undergone a comparable assimilation provided that the social and cultural conditions for this were also present. Whether they were present is a question which can only be answered by looking at the structure of the Jewish community in the period preceding the "reform" and revolution.

The Jewish Community in the Early Hellenistic Period

The Persian period, and the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah, had left the Jews as a small tightly knit community centred on the Temple, occupying a

12. *Ant*. 9, 291.

13. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 9, 17 = Jacoby, *FGrH* 724. See also Hengel, 88–92, and A.-M. Denis, "L'historien anonyme d'Eusèbe (*Praep. Ev*. 9, 17–18) et la crise des Macchabées," *JSJ* 8 (1977): 42–49. I am unable to discern why the mention of Mount Gerizim should lead to the presumption that the author was a Samaritan.

14. J. Teixidor, *The Pagan God: Popular Religion in the Greco-Roman Near East* (1977).

restricted area round Jerusalem and in uneasy relations with their Samaritan neighbours.[15] The descendants of the House of David disappear in this period, leaving the political direction of the community in the hands of the high priests, the succession of whom can now, thanks to the Samaria papyri, be more confidently reconstructed.[16] In addition to the high priest there was also a local Persian governor (*peḥah*).

No historically valid account survives of the absorption of the Jewish community into the empire of Alexander and his successors. In default of any other satisfactory context, therefore, the well-known series of Yehud coins, one of them bearing the name "Yeḥezḳiyo," has been considered as belonging to the late Persian period, as has been one with a longer inscription, "Yeḥezḳiyo ha-peḥah."[17] But now there has been published a series of coins with the legend "Yehudah," in a script similar to the latter and showing the portrait of Ptolemy I.[18] Since Ptolemy did not mint coins with his portrait until 305 B.C., the coin must relate to the period after 301 when he finally regained control of Palestine. The coins therefore tend to suggest a continuity of Judaea as a political unit into the Ptolemaic period. More than that, however, as Kindler saw, they raise once again the question of the "Hezekiah, High Priest of the Jews," whom Hecataeus of Abdera mentions as in office at the time of Ptolemy's earlier possession of Palestine, after the battle of Gaza in 312 B.C.[19] According to Hecataeus, this man was among a number of Jews who, impressed by Ptolemy's mildness and moderation, accompanied him to Egypt after the battle (the Greek does not imply that he emigrated permanently to Egypt). More important, Josephus quotes from Hecataeus the following sentence: "This man, having gained this honour and become our companion, summoning some of those with him read to them the whole scroll, which contained a written description of their settlement and constitution."[20]

What was the "honour" (*timē*) which Hezekiah had received (from

15. For a clear treatment, see J. Bright, *History of Israel*[2] (1972), chaps. 9–12. Note also the interesting, if very speculative, treatment by Morton Smith, "Palestinian Judaism in the Persian Period," in H. Bengtson, *The Greeks and the Persians* (1968), chap. 18.

16. See F. M. Cross, "A Reconstruction of the Judean Restoration," *JBL* 94 (1975): 4–18.

17. L. Y. Rahmani, "Silver Coins of the Fourth Century B.C. from Tel Gamma," *IEJ* 21 (1971): 158–60.

18. A. Kindler, "Silver Coins Bearing the Name of Judea from the Early Hellenistic Period," *IEJ* 24 (1974): 73–76; D. Jeselsohn, "A New Coin Type with Hebrew Inscription," *IEJ* 24 (1974): 77–78.

19. Quoted by Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1, 183–204 = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 12.

20. *C. Ap.* 1, 189, reading διφθέραν with Stern (n. 19).

Ptolemy?)? We must remember that at some point after Alexander's conquest the governor (*peḥah*) of the Persian period disappears, leaving the high priest as the political head of the community. The corollary of that, however, was that in the Seleucid period (from 200 B.C.), or at least by the beginning of Antiochus Epiphanes' reign (from 175 B.C.), the high priest was appointed by the king.[21] Is it possible therefore that the "honour" was indeed the high priesthood, and that it had been taken into the king's gift as early as the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, in compensation for the abandonment of the appointment of a separate governor? That would readily explain why different sources refer to this Hezekiah as high priest and as governor; and the dual function may be reflected in what Joseph the Tobiad is reputed as saying to Onias in a scene which seems clearly to belong to the Ptolemaic period, more precisely to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221 B.C.), though misplaced in Josephus' narrative. Joseph reproaches Onias (on this view Onias II) for withholding tribute due to the king, "on account of which," Joseph said, "he had received the chief magistracy [*prostasia*] and had obtained the high priestly office."[22] It would not have been impossible that *peḥah* could have remained in use to denote the secular functions now assumed by the high priest. Ptolemy himself, before his assumption of the royal title, is referred to by the Persian title "satrap" in a Greek document of 310 B.C. from Egypt (*P. Eleph.* 1).[23]

If these were the circumstances, then it would not have been surprising if there had not been unanimity as to who had been the legitimate high priest at any one time, and hence that Hezekiah did not achieve a mention in the list of high priests in Josephus. Hecataeus' evidence is further valuable for providing the view-point on the Jewish community of a sympathetic and curious gentile observer at the beginning of the Hellenistic period. He emphasises above all the rigorous observance of the Law, the privileges of the priests (1,500 in number), the hostility to pagan cults, and the centrality and importance of Jerusalem and the Temple. In another passage, transmitted by Diodorus, he emphasises the absence of a cult image, the leading role of the priests, the absence of a king (believing that there had never been one), and the importance of the high priest.[24] If Hecataeus also imported a number of idealising Greek notions into his portrait of Jewish society, it is none the less important to stress the extent to which he saw it as a community whose struc-

21. Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 237–38.

22. See *Ant.* 12, 161, Loeb trans. See Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 139.

23. *Sel. Pap.* I, no. 1.

24. Diodorus 40, 3 = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 11.

ture and conventions were fundamentally non-Greek. We lack a similarly informed witness from the end of the third century (though Agatharchides in the second, looking back to Ptolemy I's conquest of Judaea, gives a quite detailed description of the observance of the Sabbath).[25] But in any case the distinctive features of Jewish society are clearly documented in the "Seleucid charter of Jerusalem," Antiochus III's letter to an official called Ptolemaios, laying down Jewish privileges, granted as a reward for their favourable reception of him when he took Palestine from the Ptolemies in 200 B.C. After listing provisions for sacrifice and materials for building work on the Temple, he continues, "And all the members of the nation shall have a form of government in accordance with the laws of their country, and the senate [*gerousia*], the priests, the scribes of the temple and the temple singers [Levites] shall be relieved of the poll tax." A subsequent proclamation gave royal backing to the prohibition on entry to the Temple for gentiles and unclean Jews, and forbade the import into Jerusalem of the meat or skins of animals declared unclean by the dietary laws.[26]

The work of Ben Sira, written some time in the high priesthood of Simon II (late third or early second century B.C.), is notable as an original work composed in Hebrew, as emphasising two distinctive features of contemporary Jewish society, the class of hereditary priests and the scribes, and as reflecting (esp. chaps. 44–50) a deep sense of continuity with the past.[27] Very similar characteristics mark the book of Daniel, which indisputably reached its final form in the mid-160s. The documents from Qumran show that these were not isolated features. Without going into details beyond the competence of the author, it will be enough to emphasise that the Qumran texts include parts of every old Testament book except Esther, and a substantial range of original works related to biblical themes and written in this period is in either Hebrew or Aramaic.[28] For instance, no reader of the fascinating fragments edited by J. T. Milik[29] will be readily disposed to assent without severe qualification to the proposition that Palestinian Judaism was as Hel-

25. Josephus, *C. Ap* 1, 205–11 = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 30a.

26. Preserved only by Josephus, *Ant*. 12, 138–46. But note the documents relating to this Ptolemaios in the inscription published by Y. H. Landau, "A Greek Inscription Found near Hefzibah," *IEJ* 16 (1966): 54–70 (= *SEG* XXIX 1613).

27. See E. Rivkin, "Ben Sira—The Bridge between the Aaronide and Pharisaic Revolutions," *Eretz-Israel* 12 (1975): 95*–103*. Part of the original Hebrew text has, of course, been recovered at Masada; see Y. Yadin, "The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada," in *Masada: Final Reports* VI (1999), 151–252.

28. See up-to-date surveys in DJD XXXIX (2002).

29. J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (1976).

lenistic as that of the diaspora. On the contrary, what we should emphasise is the uniqueness of the phenomenon of an original and varied non-Greek literary activity developing in a small area only a few miles from the Mediterranean coast. The preservation of a native culture in Egypt or in distant Babylonia is by no means so surprising a phenomenon.

What is more, it is precisely the nature of the first phase of the Hellenising movement after 175 B.C., instituted beyond question by elements within the Jewish community, which shows how *un*-Greek Jerusalem had remained up to that moment. It is important to emphasise the earliest phase of the Hellenising movement—that which preceded the robbery of the Temple treasures and the forcible persecution of Judaism—because it is here that we have the clearest evidence of initiatives from within the community; because it shows the relation of the Seleucid king to the high priesthood; and precisely because it shows the *novelty* of Hellenistic ways of life in the Jerusalem of the 170s. 1 Macc. 1:11–15 (followed by Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 240–41) preserves only the overall ideology of "making a covenant with the peoples round about," and the details of the establishment of a gymnasium and concealment of circumcision. For a fuller conception we have to turn to 2 Maccabees, the subject of an excellent German translation and commentary by Chr. Habicht (the first time, it should be noted, that this major product of Hellenistic historiography has been studied in detail by an expert in Hellenistic history and epigraphy).[30] It is worth looking again at the much-quoted passage of 2 Macc. 4:7–14 which describes the events following the death of Seleucus IV Philopator in 175 B.C.:

> But when Seleucus departed this life and the kingdom was taken by Antiochus, called Epiphanes, Jason the brother of Onias, usurped the high priesthood by illegitimate means, promising the king in a petition 360 talents of silver, and 80 talents of other revenue. He undertook beyond this to pay a further 150 talents if he were granted permission to establish by his own authority a gymnasium and a corps of ephebes and to enrol those in Jerusalem as "Antiochenes."[31] When the king agreed,

30. *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* I: *Historische und legendarische Erzählungen* 3; Chr. Habicht, *2. Makkabäerbuch* (1976).

31. The translation of this phrase is a notorious crux. I take it to mean that all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were to become citizens of a new *polis* called (like many others) "Antiochia." For the clearest statement of this view, and a refutation of Bickermann's interpretation, that the reference is to the establishment of a corporation of "Antiochenes" *within* the population of Jerusalem, see G. Le Rider, *Suse sous les Séleucides et les Parthes* (Mém. Miss. Arch. Iran. 38, 1965), 410–11.

> and he gained the office, he immediately set about converting his fellow countrymen to the Greek way of life. Abolishing the existing royal privileges gained by Iohannes, the father of the Eupolemus who (later) undertook an embassy to Rome for friendship and alliance—and the legitimate institutions, he brought in illegal customs. For he saw fit to establish a gymnasium below the acropolis and lead there the most athletic of the ephebes wearing sunhats. There was such a flowering of Hellenism and advance of gentile customs through the overwhelming wickedness of the impious Jason, no true high priest, that the priests were no longer conscientious over the duties concerned with the sacrifice, but, despising the Temple and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to take part in the unlawful exercises in the palaestra as soon as the sound of the discus summoned them.

It is noticeable in this account that the events depended on the right of the king to dispose of the high priesthood; that the services of the Temple continued, if neglected to some degree; that there had been no previous gymnasium in Jerusalem; and that even the wearing of the Greek sunhat (*petasos*) was regarded as an outrageous novelty. The testimony of 1 Maccabees and Josephus (above) would also confirm that the Hellenisers and their followers had all been circumcised, a step which they attempted to reverse.

None the less, there is no sign at this stage of any change in Temple ritual, of any enforcement by Seleucid officials or of any popular resistance. These further steps came when the possibility of acquiring the high priesthood from Antiochus had led to the replacement of Jason by Menelaus (2 Macc. 4:23–25). It is important to emphasise that this is a new phase. There is no evidence to connect Menelaus with the Hellenising movement described above, except that his opportunity to gain office from Antiochus came when he was sent to take money to him from Jason (4:23). In his time as high priest, if we may follow the only detailed narrative (2 Macc. 4:26–5:27), there was oppression in Jerusalem by him, civil war between his party and that of the deposed Jason, culminating during Antiochus IV Epiphanes' invasion of Egypt in 169 B.C.,[32] and finally (169/8) the entry of the king and his forces into Jerusalem, a massacre of the inhabitants, entry into the Holy of Holies by the king, and robbery of the Temple treasures. When the king departed, he left an overseer (*epistates*) in Jerusalem and another over the Samaritans at Mount Gerizim (2 Macc. 5:22–23).

32. The chronology is, of course, much disputed. I would however retain that of Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 150–53.

Drastic and violent changes thus intervened between the Hellenising movement initiated by Jason, and the desecration of the Temple and forcible persecution of Judaism which followed under his rival and successor, Menelaus, in 167–164 B.C. In between came Antiochus' invasion of Egypt in 168, stopped outside Alexandria by the famous Roman mission led by Popillius Laenas. It may not be irrelevant in the context to note that truly remarkable evidence, in the form of demotic dream texts from Egypt, supports the testimony of Porphyry and Jerome on Daniel, and of a Greek papyrus, that in this phase Antiochus was claiming the kingship of Egypt, was crowned at Memphis, and acted as king in Upper Egypt.[33]

For the author of Daniel (11:30) clearly saw some connection between the rebuff of Antiochus by the "ships of Kittim" and the persecution which followed. What Antiochus' motives may have been will be discussed in the next section, and what cult was established in the Temple in the last one. What is relevant at this stage is to emphasise, firstly, that the Temple cult had continued apparently unaffected through the phase of Hellenism and the depredations of Antiochus in 169/8; and secondly, and more important, the extent of the Jewish observances which the persecution attempted to eradicate. To say this is not to deny the truth of Hengel's demonstration (289–90) that many Jews apostatised, went over to the Greek side, and aided the persecution; as Hengel shows, it was largely at them that the Maccabean movement was aimed. None the less, the persecuting measures were directed against the keeping of the Sabbath and festivals, the offering of the traditional sacrifices in the Temple, circumcision, and possession of the Torah (1 Macc. 1:41–64; 2 Macc. 6:1–31; Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 251–56). The narratives also presuppose observance of the dietary laws, at least in respect of pork.

Whether any Jews played an active role in initiating *this* phase of the conflict (as opposed to the Hellenising movement under Jason) is a question to which we shall have to return. What is clear on the one hand is that the persecution involved something much wider than the transformation or substitution of a cult in the Temple; the Maccabean resistance arose in response to attempts to change by force the private observances of the populace. It is precisely the evidence for these observances, and of the resistance to abandoning them which, along with that previously mentioned, indicating the continuity of the Jewish community from the post-Exilic period, shows how misleading it is to take some Hellenistic influences on the literary or philosophical products of Judaism and deduce from them that Judaism itself had become "Hellenistic." Though it is possible to find parallels, in Syria and Egypt, for

33. See J. D. Ray, *The Archive of Hor* (1976), esp. 124–30.

circumcision[34] and the avoidance of pork,[35] the existence of a complex set of observances binding (in principle) on the whole population has no parallel; nor do we yet know of any other Near Eastern people speaking a Semitic language who in the Hellenistic period generated a whole range of works in different genres in their own language (or languages, Hebrew and Aramaic). Finally, if slight traces reveal (text to n. 7 above) that the Phoenicians still possessed a historical tradition of their own, nothing parallels the existence of a sacred book which was at the same time a national history, and which, as Ben Sira, Maccabees, and the Qumran documents all show, was in active circulation among the people and was the primary agent in forming their consciousness.

The proclamation of Antiochus III had explicitly recognised both the distinctive socio-political status and the distinctive observances of the Jewish people. Have we enough evidence to say whether the events under Antiochus IV were the product of a new policy or conviction, and if so why and to what end?

Antiochus Epiphanes and Judaism

It is a striking feature of modern historiography that there should be so strong a tendency to look to sources other than the reigning Seleucid king himself for the explanation of a persecution carried out by royal command and by royal agents.[36] The presumption that changes should be seen in terms of the wider structures and ideologies of society is not easily reconciled with the fact of monarchy. Yet both pagan and Jewish sources reflect the view that Antiochus did intend some overall change in Jewish observance. Diodorus, in retailing the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus VII Sidetes, used a story which represented the king's advisers as reminding him of how Epiphanes had entered the Holy of Holies and found an image which he supposed to be that of Moses, who had created the misanthropic customs of the Jews:

> And since Epiphanes was shocked by such hatred directed against all mankind, he had set himself to break down their traditional practices. Accordingly, he sacrificed before the image of the founder and the open-air altar of the god a great sow, and poured its blood over them. Then, having prepared its flesh, he ordered that their holy books, con-

34. See the references in Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 537–40.

35. See, e.g., Bickermann, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 134.

36. So, before Hengel, Bickermann, *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 117ff.; but cf. V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilisation and the Jews* (1959), 175ff.

> taining the xenophobic laws, should be sprinkled with the broth of the meat; that the lamp, which they call undying and which burns continually in the temple, should be extinguished; and that the high priest and the rest of the Jews should be compelled to partake of the meat.[37]

Sidetes, however, was not moved but made peace with the Jews. What concerns us, however, is that the story, for all its mythical elements, embodies the conception, followed later by Tacitus, *Hist.* 5, 8, on the part of a pagan author, that Antiochus had been seized by the conviction that Jewish observances were undesirable and should be abolished. It should be noted, however, that there is no hint from this pagan source of "syncretism." What was involved in the view of Diodorus was abolition.

Now it is a notorious (and true) commonplace that ancient states, though they controlled (and might therefore reject, or attempt to reject) the importation of foreign cults, fundamentally respected the existing gods and cults of different localities. The Ptolemies for instance, regulated and controlled the revenues of Egyptian temples. But there was no question of their attempting to abolish them and institute Greek gods and temples. In Syria, as we saw earlier, non-Greek temples and cults survived the Seleucid period and were famous and frequented under the Roman Empire. In Babylonia cuneiform documents associated with the major temples persist through the Seleucid period; a particularly relevant one shows Antiochus I Soter (280–262/1 B.C.) proclaiming his restoration of the temples of Esagila and Ezida.[38] The only hint of a different attitude comes in an illustration given by Pausanias of the justice and piety of Seleucus I (312–281 B.C.); "when he founded Seleucia on the river Tigris, and brought Babylonian colonists to it, he left standing both the walls of Babylon and the sanctuary of Bel, and allowed the Chaldaeans to dwell round the sanctuary as before."[39] The passage contains just a suggestion of presumptions which might have been relevant when a city called "Antiochia" was established in place of Jerusalem. But in fact Seleucus had permitted the continuation of the local cult; and in Jerusalem not only had Antiochus III given privileges which specifically reflected the Temple cult, and the structure of the society related to it, but (according to 2 Macc. 3:3) Seleucus IV Philopator (187–175 B.C.) had paid for the sacrifices out of his own funds.

What happened under Antiochus Epiphanes was therefore both an exception to an undeniable general pattern and a break with the established

37. Diodorus 34/5, I (Loeb trans.) = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 63.

38. J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (1969), 317.

39. Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1, 16, 3, trans. Frazer.

relations between the Seleucid kings and Jerusalem. Nor is there any obvious explanation for it in the patterns of Antiochus' behaviour towards the wider Greek world: his generosities to cities and temples show nothing more than the display which was essential to the role-playing of any ambitious Hellenistic monarch; and the evidence for his foundation of new Greek cities is less than has been supposed.[40] But two innovations on the part of Antiochus are undeniable: he was the first Seleucid king to use the title "god manifest" (*Theos Epiphanēs*) documented on coins and an inscription; and he moved away from his dynasty's traditional devotion to Apollo to a particular reverence for Olympian Zeus, whose image replaced that of Apollo on the coins of Antioch. He also built, or contributed to, temples of Olympian Zeus elsewhere, as in Athens and Priene. Both phenomena are connected by Bunge with his difficulties in establishing his regime after his usurpation in 175.[41] The notion that Antiochus identified *himself* as Zeus is now universally rejected. But it is significant that the mint of Antioch, followed by many others, portrayed him with a radiate head which was the recognised symbol of the sun god (*Helios*).[42] As always, it is a matter of speculation what effect if any such changes in the iconography of a ruler had on the attitudes of his subjects. Daniel, however, does allude, in obscure terms (11:36–39), to some changes in religious observance by Antiochus.

We have already noted the role of the king in the first phase of "Hellenism" in Jerusalem, which required no more on his part than the (as I suggest) established right of the appointment of the high priest by the king, a pressing need for money, and that general attachment to the notion of Greek city life which we would expect any Hellenistic king to have shared. Nor do the massacre in Jerusalem and the robbery of the Temple treasures in 169/8 B.C., between the Egyptian campaigns, need any very special explanation; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2, 84, can quote a number of pagan historians for the view that he did so simply to obtain much-needed funds. What does require such an explanation is the positive measures of 167 B.C. Our only contemporary source, Daniel, sees these steps as a reaction to the rebuff by Popillius Laenas in 168 (11:70): "The ships of Kittim will set out and go against him, and he will be humbled. And he will turn back and rage against the holy covenant. And he will take action and turn and pay heed to those who desert the holy covenant." Daniel

40. See the valuable discussion by O. Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria* (1966), chaps. 3 and 7.

41. J. G. Bunge, " 'Theos Epiphanes,' Zu den ersten fünf Regierungsjahren Antiochos IV Epiphanes," *Historia* 23 (1974): 57–85.

42. J. G. Bunge, " 'Antiochus-Helios,' Methoden und Ergebnisse der Reichspolitik Antiochos' IV Epiphanes von Syrien im Spiegel seiner Münzen," *Historia* 24 (1975): 164–88.

thus sees the event as springing from the state of mind of the king, alluding in passing, however, to his paying attention to "those who desert the holy covenant." He clearly alludes to the establishment of a gentile garrison in Jerusalem, less clearly to a general prohibition of Jewish observances. 1 Macc. 1:29–64 also sees the events as initiated by the king, who began by sending "to the cities of Juda" an official with an army, and establishing a garrison. The elegy which concludes the first section (1:36–40) implies that already at this stage the effect was a flight of the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem and neglect of the Temple. Then there follows the statement (1:41) that the king "wrote to all his kingdom that all should be one people and that each (people) should abandon their own customs. All the peoples conformed to the word of the king." We have to admit that no other evidence survives for any such general measure, or indeed any comparable measure affecting anyone except Jews and Samaritans. The description of the persecution which follows (1:44–64) shows both a prohibition of Jewish observances and of the Temple cult, as mentioned above, and a positive enforcement of pagan observances, both in Jerusalem and elsewhere. It was when the royal officials came to Modein to compel the people to sacrifice that Mattathias began the Maccabean movement (1 Macc. 2:15–28).

2 Maccabees, always more circumstantial, describes three separate missions by royal officials to Judaea: a Phrygian named Philippus left as *epistatēs* (commander) in 169/8 (5:22), and one Andronicus as *epistatēs* over the Samaritans (5:23); then the "mysarch" (an unintelligible term) Apollonius, with a force which carried out a massacre (5:24–26); and finally an Athenian named Geron "to force the Jews to give up their ancestral beliefs and no longer order their lives according to God's commands. And also to desecrate the Temple in Jerusalem and dedicate it to Zeus Olympius, and that on Mount Gerizim, as the inhabitants had petitioned, to Zeus Xenius."[43] 2 Maccabees goes on to describe the positive and negative features of the persecution in comparable terms, adding the vital detail that a decree was sent out to the neighbouring Greek cities to enforce the same measures on the Jews there (6:8–9).

It is not necessary to consider in the same detail the secondary account in Josephus (*Ant.* 12, 251–64) except to note that it represents the Samaritan petition (text to n. 10 above) as a reaction to their exposure to the same persecution. They address the king as "Basileus Antiochus *Theos Epiphanes*"; they assert that they are Sidonians, not Jews; claim that their observance of some Jewish customs is adventitious (which the king's memorandum takes

43. For this reading of the phrase, see Habicht, *2. Makkabäerbuch*, on this verse.

as meaning that they will live according to Greek customs); and ask for their temple "without a name" on Mount Gerizim to be dedicated to Zeus Hellenius.

Even if we take this document as essentially authentic (some doubts are expressed in text following n. 10 above), it and the parallel reference in 2 Maccabees remain the only evidence that anybody in the locality actually requested that the temple should be dedicated to Zeus. No such evidence exists for Jerusalem.

Thus our evidence, both pagan and Jewish, shows that what was involved in the 160s involved (a) measures taken by officials and troops sent by Antiochus; (b) a renunciation of Jewish customs and observances by all those regarded as following them, in Jerusalem, in the "cities" of Judaea (like Modein), in the Samaritan territory, and (according to 2 Maccabees) in the surrounding Greek cities (but not, so far as we know, among the Jewish communities of Greek cities elsewhere, such as Antioch); (c) an imposition on individuals of acts of pagan worship; (d) an attribution to Zeus, under different names, of the temples on Mount Gerizim and in Jerusalem; and (e) (attested only for Jerusalem) a transformation of the cult in the Temple, of a nature and purpose which have yet to be discussed.

The evidence of actual events would thus support the view of Diodorus, or his source, that at any rate one motive which was involved was an intention on the part of Antiochus to abolish by force all observance of the Law. This conclusion is strongly supported if we accept as authentic the royal letters collected out of chronological order in 2 Macc. 11.[44] In spring 164 B.C., before the recapture of the Temple, Antiochus writes from his eastern expedition, to the "*gerousia* [council or council of elders?] of the Jews and the other Jews" promising an amnesty to those who return home before a certain date and saying "the Jews may use their own way of life and customs as before" (11:27–33). Even more clearly, after Antiochus' death near the end of 164, his successor, Antiochus V Eupator, writes to an official: "Now that our father has departed to the gods . . . learning that the Jews, not consenting to the adoption of Greek customs wished by our father, but preferring their own way of life, demand that they should be granted the observance of their laws, we, desiring that this people should be at peace, have decided that their temple should be restored to them and that this community should live according to the customs of their forebears" (11:22–26).

By this time the Temple had already been re-captured and re-dedicated,

44. For the most authoritative discussion, see Habicht, *2. Makkabäerbuch*, 180–84. Note Habicht, "The Royal Letters in Maccabees II," *Harv. Stud. Class. Phil.* 80 (1976): 1–18.

though a Seleucid garrison remained in Jerusalem; so Antiochus was in this respect restoring what he no longer held. But the vital implication of both letters is that there had indeed been a policy of conversion on the part of Antiochus, and that it concerned essentially the question of Jewish or of Greek customs and observances.

The fact is, in my view, established. It is best to confess, however, that there seems no way of reaching an understanding of how Antiochus came to take a step so profoundly at variance with the normal assumptions of government in his time. We may note, however, that he did have a later imitator: for it can hardly be an accident that Hadrian, the most phil-Hellenic (and well read) of Roman emperors, was to forbid circumcision and to re-found Jerusalem as a Roman *colonia* named after Jupiter Capitolinus.

There remain the two related questions: what evidence have we for the influence of Jewish Hellenisers on Antiochus' decision and for the nature of the cult established in the Temple in 167–164 B.C.?

The Hellenisers and the Temple Cult of 167–164 B.C.

As we saw above, Menelaus had gained the high priesthood by outbidding his predecessor, Jason, the leader of the earlier Hellenising movement. Nothing in our sources reveals his role at that stage, or (in relation to the question of Hellenism) during his high priesthood except that in the course of a confused passage (*Ant.* 12, 237–41) Josephus says that when pressed by the deposed Jason (see above) Menelaus and the Tobiads—never mentioned in this context by either book of Maccabees—went to Antiochus and said that they wished to adopt Greek customs. But the whole context is muddled, and we do not reach good evidence until Antiochus IV's letter of spring 164 B.C. (above), which shows Menelaus with the king on his campaign of that time, interceding for the Jews, and being sent back to attempt a reconciliation. The letter does not call him high priest (and therefore it is just conceivable that the identification is wrong), but it is clear that Menelaus remained in office as high priest until put to death while in the entourage of Antiochus V Eupator in 163/2 B.C. Here 2 Macc. (13:3–8) notes that it was proved to the king that Menelaus was "responsible for all the evils" and also comments that he had "committed many wrongs in relation to the Altar"; but it says nothing more specific about his previous role. Josephus is more definite:

> For Lysias had advised the king to slay Menelaus, if he wished the Jews to remain quiet and not give him any trouble; it was this man, he said, who had been the cause of the mischief by persuading the king's father

> to compel the Jews to abandon their fathers' religion. Accordingly, the king sent Menelaus to Beroea in Syria, and there had him put to death; he had served as high priest for ten years, and had been a wicked and impious man, who in order to have sole authority for himself had compelled his nation to violate their own laws.[45]

It must be emphasised that this passage of Josephus, whose account is secondary, filled with abbreviations and confusions, and separated by two and a half centuries from the events in question, is the most concrete and specific evidence we have for the responsibility of Menelaus (or any other "Helleniser") for the persecution by Antiochus. For what it is worth, like all our other explicit evidence, it refers not to the creation of a syncretistic cult but to a forcible suppression of Judaism.

None the less, it is true that Menelaus was given the high priesthood by Antiochus; survived an armed challenge by his predecessor, Jason; kept his office through the period of persecution, acting at least once as intermediary between the king and the Jews; and was succeeded after his execution by Alcimus, or Yakim—a true descendant of Aaron, unlike himself—who was appointed by Antiochus V Eupator, and was skilful enough to have himself reconfirmed by Demetrius when he seized the Seleucid throne in 162 B.C.[46] The fact that there was thus a continuity in the occupation of the high priesthood is reason enough to ask whether there was any continuity in the form or object of the cult practised in the Temple before and after 167. For the change to be such that we could properly call it a *reform* at least three conditions would have to be satisfied. That there was a continuity of personnel, which there was, at least in the person of the high priest; that these individuals either initiated or were personally committed to the change, for which the evidence is at best very slight; and, above all, that it continued to be monotheistic, at the very least in the weak sense of recognising one god as clearly supreme amongst others.

Notoriously, the further in time our sources are from these events, the more specific they are about the cults and cult objects now established. But this question, discussed brilliantly but speculatively by Bickermann[47] and more dispassionately by Hengel (292–303), is absolutely central to the whole issue. For unless the nature of the cult can be clearly established, discussions

45. *Ant.* 12, 384–85 (Loeb trans.).

46. For Alcimus/Yakim, see 1 Macc. 7:5–25; 2 Macc. 14:3–13; Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 385–87, 391–92.

47. *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 90–116.

of what form of ideology or religious belief led to it become largely pointless.

We may leave out of account here those cult acts or other actions (like eating pork) which were forcibly imposed on the population solely in order to make them break the Mosaic law, and concentrate on what little is actually attested of the new cult forms in the Temple. For the reasons mentioned above, the order of treatment must be chronological.

Firstly, Daniel 11, though it refers to the "abomination of desolation" (v. 31) and to the establishment in Jerusalem of a foreign garrison worshipping a foreign god (v. 39), cannot provide us with any specific information about the cult.

Secondly, 2 Macc. 6 is much more helpful. It records the dedication (on the orders of Antiochus) of the Temple to Zeus Olympius and of that on Mount Gerizim to Zeus Xenius, the latter on the request of the inhabitants (see above). Orgies involving intercourse with women (i.e., ritual prostitution?) took place in the Temple precincts. Unlawful sacrifices were made on the Altar of Burnt Offering. The royal birthday was celebrated, as were feasts of Dionysus. Chapter 10 reveals that pagan altars had been placed in the market-place of Jerusalem and sacred precincts established.

Thirdly, 1 Macc. 1 reveals that many Israelites sacrificed to idols (v. 43) and that the king's order involved the construction of "altars, sacred precincts, and shrines for idols." The "abomination of desolation" was set on the Altar, and other altars were built in the cities of Judaea (54). Verse 59 shows that the "abomination" was a pagan altar placed on the Altar of Burnt Offering.

Fourthly, Diodorus 34/5, 1 (see above), under the impression that the Temple contained a cult statue of Moses, as Founder, records that Antiochus sacrificed a sow to him on "the open-air altar."

Fifthly, Josephus, in *BJ* 1, 34, also relates that a sow was sacrificed on the Altar, and more specifically, in *Ant*. 12, 253, that he built a pagan altar over the Altar and sacrificed swine on it.

This evidence is all that we have from sources reasonably close in time to the events. It is noticeable that they tend to concentrate on the new form of sacrifice on the Altar of Burnt Offering. None makes any reference to the Holy of Holies or to the establishment in the Temple of any pagan cult statue. Later sources, however, do make specific assertions relating to cult statues.

Sixthly, Jerome's *Commentary* on Daniel, using Porphyry's detailed discussion of it written in the later third century A.D., makes a number of detailed statements about the cults imposed: Antiochus established a statue of Zeus Olympius in the Temple (on 8:14–15); later he states that as well as the *simulacrum* (image) of Zeus statues of Antiochus himself were placed in the

Temple (on Dan. 11:31; also on v. 36), and that it was these which Daniel called the "abomination of desolation."[48] The chronicler Georgius Syncellus (531 Dindorf) also reports the establishment of a statue of Zeus Olympius in the Temple, while Ioannes Malalas states that the Temple was dedicated to Zeus Olympius and Athena (206–7 Dindorf).

Later writers thus clearly assumed that the attribution of the Temple to Zeus will have involved a cult statue. If we use their testimony at all—which we probably should not—we cannot avoid its implications simply by denying, as did Bickermann,[49] that such statues will have been objects of cult. In conclusion, however, it has to be admitted that we do not know whether there was a cult statue, or more than one, in the Temple. All that we can be certain of is that the Temple was dedicated to Zeus Olympius, the favoured god of Antiochus, and that sacrifices of pigs were carried out on a pagan altar constructed over the Altar of Burnt Offering.

But if the Temple was dedicated to one god, that was no more than a normal feature of paganism. It would imply some form of monotheism only if our best evidence showed categorically that other cults were not imposed on the Jewish population. But our most detailed evidence, 2 Maccabees, shows precisely that a number of altars and sacred precincts were established, and specifically that rites in honour of Diosysus were required. In short, what was imposed was paganism.

Conclusion

Little of the evidence discussed above is absent from Hengel's learned and invaluable book. What is offered as a reflection on it is a basic change of emphasis. I would argue, firstly, that the evidence shows how un-Greek in structure, customs, observance, literary culture, language, and historical outlook the Jewish community had remained down the earlier second century, and how basic to it the rules reimposed by Ezra and Nehemiah had remained.[50] That

48. References are to the text in *Corp. Christ. Lat.* LXXVA (1964), *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Opera* 1.5 *Commentarium in Danielem Libri III.*

49. *Der Gott der Makkabäer*, 102.

50. I would thus not wish to accept the conclusions of Howard Clark Kee in his valuable and interesting review of the new Schürer in *Religious Studies Review* 2, Oct. 1976, 4–6: namely that Schürer's work, even as revised, represents an outdated conception of Jewish life in this period as dominated by the Law; rather the future belongs with Hengel's conception of it as profoundly Hellenised. The evidence now available seems to me to suggest otherwise even more strongly than did that known to Schürer.

there was a "Hellenising movement" is beyond all question, but by far the best evidence for it relates to the first phase, the establishment of Jerusalem as a Greek city called "Antiochia" and its gymnasium in the 170s. To see the whole course of events as the work of a "Hellenising party" is to ignore the change of the high priesthood from Jason to Menelaus; to underestimate the violence and extent of direct Seleucid administrative and military intervention; and to build an immense structure on a few fragments of evidence (almost entirely from Josephus' confused account) laying the responsibility for what happened on Menelaus and his associates.

However difficult it may be to accommodate it within our normal views of Hellenistic rule in Asia, the evidence, both Jewish and pagan, asserts that the programme of "forced" conversion to Hellenism (or paganism) was that of Antiochus and was carried out by his agents. He did not, it is true, conduct it in person; moreover, by 165 B.C., the need to exact taxes from the central Asian provinces of his empire was more pressing than the concerns of Judaea, and he died far away in Elymais at just about the moment when Jewish worship was restored in the Temple. Even before that he had begun to compromise, and his son Antiochus V at once formally abandoned his father's attempt to force the Jews to accept "Greek customs."

That was what it had been (as indeed Hengel admits, 292). It follows that literary or philosophical identifications of the Jewish God with Zeus or a "Highest God" of the pagan pantheon would have only a restricted relevance, even if—which is not the case—they could be shown to have been shared by persons living in Judaea in the period leading up to the "reform attempt." For the events of 167 we lack not only any convincing evidence of the theology of the putative "reformers" or (as above) for their influence on Antiochus, but also any adequate grounds for believing that the cult then established had clearly monotheistic features, or retained anything from the previous worship in the Temple which would entitle it to be called a "reform" rather than an abolition.

These are difficult questions, if of the greatest historical importance; and no one, least of all the author, will wish to claim that he has divined with certainty a reality different from that portrayed in Hengel's great work. But it may yet be helpful to put forward, as hypotheses, a number of propositions which together would present a totally different conception of these events from that of Hengel: (a) that what was significant about the Jewish community of the third and second centuries B.C. was the superficiality of its Hellenism; (b) that there was a reform attempt, initiated from within the community, but confined to the high priesthood of Jason; (c) that the crisis

of the 160s arose from an attempt by Antiochus Epiphanes to impose by force the abolition of Judaism and the adoption of paganism; (d) that, while many Jews certainly assented to this, the evidence for a Hellenising party having instigated it is very slight; and (e) that we should not look for the intellectual background of a syncretistic reform movement within Judaism, because we have no clear evidence that such a movement existed.

CHAPTER FIVE

Polybius between Greece and Rome[*]

I would like to begin with some much-quoted words of Polybius himself (1, 1, 5). "For who is so worthless or so idle as not to wish to find out by what steps and overcome by what sort of political structure almost all parts of the inhabited world have, in the space of hardly fifty-three years, fallen under the domination of the Romans, a thing which is not found ever to have happened before?"

The fifty-three years which Polybius refers to were those which began in 220 B.C., the moment when, in his view, events in all parts of the Hellenised world, previously separate, began to be interconnected; they ended in 168 B.C., when, at the battle of Pydna, Rome destroyed the first of the great Hellenistic monarchies, that of the Antigonids, which had ruled Macedonia for a little over a century. By "domination" (*archē*) Polybius did not mean what we often mean when we think of the formation of the Roman Empire: the creation of territorial provinces and the imposition of tribute. He meant military victory, the right to decide whether or in what form a city or a kingdom might keep its independence, and the ability to command obedience by the threat of force.[1]

That same year, 168 B.C., saw the most spectacular of all examples of the exercise of Roman domination in this sense. Antiochus IV, the ruler of the Seleucid kingdom, based on Syria and Babylonia, had invaded Egypt, had defeated the Ptolemies, had claimed the kingship of Egypt for himself,[2] and

[*]First published in J. A. T. Koumoulides, ed., *Greek Connections: Essays on Culture and Diplomacy* (Bloomington, Ind., 1987), 1–18. The translations in the text are those of the Loeb edition.

1. See P. S. Derow, "Polybius, Rome and the East," *JRS* 69 (1979): 1.
2. For the decisive evidence that he had, see J. D. Ray, *The Archive of Hor* (1976), 127.

was outside Alexandria with his army. But at that moment there appeared a Roman ambassador, Popillius Laenas, who handed the king the text of a decree of the Senate, telling him to end his war with Egypt. When the king said that he would consult with his advisers, Laenas made the famous gesture of drawing a circle in the sand round where the king was standing and telling him to give his answer before stepping out of it. The king submitted. The earliest narrative of this famous scene comes from Polybius himself (29, 27). But the humiliation of the king made an immediate impact in the eastern Mediterranean, as we know from a pseudo-prophecy in the book of Daniel, written only a couple of years later (11:30): "For the ships of Kittim will come, and he shall be grieved and return."[3]

While the two Ptolemies were still in danger from Antiochus IV's advance, the major league of Greek cities in the Peloponnese, the Achaean league, had debated whether to send military assistance to them. Ambassadors from the two Ptolemies, brothers who were formerly at odds but now reconciled, had arrived asking for the dispatch of 1,000 foot soldiers and 200 cavalry. The infantry were to be commanded by Lycortas, Polybius' father, and the cavalry by Polybius himself, now probably in his thirties.[4] The proposal, however, ran into difficulties; the pro-Roman party argued that all their efforts should be directed to helping the Romans in their current war against Perseus, the king of Macedon, in which a decisive battle was now (rightly) expected. Polybius replied that in the previous year (169 B.C.), when he had been sent as ambassador to the Roman commander, he had been told that the Romans needed no military assistance; in any case the Achaean league could raise 30,000 or even 40,000 men if need be, so 1,000 going off to Alexandria would make no difference (29, 23–25).

In fact, the force was not sent to Alexandria. In the same year, 168 B.C., the Romans defeated the Macedonians at Pydna, and the kingdom was dissolved. In the following year large numbers of political figures in Greece, regarded as anti-Roman, were taken off to exile in Rome and Italy: among these were 1,000 from Achaea, including Polybius himself. They were to remain there for seventeen years until their eventual release in 150 B.C.

It was in Rome that Polybius conceived his enormously ambitious plan for a universal history which would, first, show how events in all the different parts of the civilized (i.e., Hellenised) world came together in a set of causal interconnections, from 220 B.C. onwards. It would therefore cover an un-

3. On Daniel, see chapter 3 in the present volume.

4. For the dates of Polybius's life, see M. Dubuisson, "Sur la mort de Polybe," *REG* 93 (1980): 72.

precedented geographical range, from Antiochus III's campaigns in northern India in the last decade of the third century to the Roman wars in Spain. The work was also on an enormous scale in itself. Had it survived complete, it would have run to over 4,000 printed pages of a Teubner text, or twenty Loeb volumes. As it is, what remains occupies six Loeb volumes. This always has to be remembered when we speak of what Polybius thought—or what he seems to have omitted.

One reason the work was so long was that Polybius changed his mind about where it should end. The original stopping point was to be the destruction of the Macedonian kingdom in 168 B.C. But at the beginning of book 3 he describes why he changed his mind:

> Now, if from their success or failure alone we could form an adequate judgment of how far states or individuals are worthy of praise or blame, I could here lay down my pen. . . . For the period of fifty-three years finished here and the growth and advance of Roman power was now complete. . . . But since judgments regarding either the conquerors or the conquered based purely on performance are by no means final . . . I must append to the history of the above period an account of the subsequent policy of the conquerors and their method of universal rule, as well as of the various opinions and appreciations of these rulers entertained by the subjects. (3, 4)

He therefore, in this second introduction, sketches the events which were to occupy the last ten books (30–39), covering the years from 167 to 146 B.C. The culminating point was to be the war of 147–146 B.C., in which the Achaean league rose in revolt against Rome and was destroyed. It is crucial to his whole historical perspective that he chose the tragic end of his own league as his conclusion; this, along with the Roman defeat of a renewed revolt in Macedon, was "the general disaster of all Hellas" (3, 5, 6).

Polybius' second intention, in his original plan, had been not merely to describe how all these complex events interlocked but to explain why the Romans had been successful. The explanation, as the quotation with which this essay begins indicated, was to be in terms of the Roman constitution or political structure, the *politeia*: "Who would not wish to find out . . . what sort of *politeia* had enabled the Romans to achieve domination of the whole civilised world?" The reference is of course to the famous analysis of the working of the Roman constitution and political system in book 6, which he placed just after the Romans' most crushing defeat, by Hannibal at Cannae in 216 B.C. This in other words was the moment when, if there were weaknesses in the system, they would show up. In fact the Roman system, with its

elaborate checks and balances, showed remarkable resilience, and Hannibal was ultimately defeated.

As to the question of whether Polybius' analysis of Rome was appropriate or wholly misguided, my view is that it was not in the least inappropriate to discuss Rome in terms of Greek political theory, or to compare it to well-known Greek models.[5] But my main point is that to understand Polybius we have to accept that his whole perspective is that of the self-governing Greek city, or league, of the classical and Hellenistic periods. The second point is that Polybius' intention, in analysing the reasons for the success of Rome, was neutral: to give reasons for success and resilience is not in itself to recommend a system, still less to praise the results of its success.

That brings me to a third preliminary point. In going on to cover the troubled period from 167 to 146 B.C., Polybius evidently did intend to introduce an element of moral judgement into his *History*. How in fact had the victors used their power? There is no simple or unambiguous way of stating Polybius' conclusion. In a paper with the same title as this one, F. W. Walbank, the greatest modern expert on Polybius, concluded that on the whole his view was favourable.[6] I think otherwise; that Polybius, though he expresses himself obliquely, took an increasingly distant and hostile view of Roman domination. At the very least, one point is surely remarkable by its absence. In the whole surviving text there is not a single word to the effect that Roman domination was a good thing or brought benefits to those who came under it. For a man who believed that the Achaean revolution of 147–146 B.C. was a tragic error, who had spent seventeen years in Rome, and who had friends in the highest Roman circles, this silence surely speaks volumes.

There is more to it than that, however. In the second to last of the surviving books (38) he comes to the Achaean war of 147–146 B.C., which destroyed his own Achaean league, which he had called in book 2 the political system best fitted of all for equality and freedom of speech—in fact, true democracy (2, 38, 6). To introduce the Achaean war he puts it deliberately in a long historical perspective: going back to Xerxes' invasion of Greece in 480 B.C., he reviews all the major calamities and conflicts in Greek history, and concludes that this was the greatest disaster of all; partly because it was the Achaeans' own fault, partly because in other cases no moral blame had been incurred,

5. For this view, see "The Political Character of the Classical Roman Republic (200–151 B.C.)," *JRS* 74 (1984): 1–19 (= chapter 4 in F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* I: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*).

6. F. W. Walbank, "Polybius between Greece and Rome," *Polybe* (Entretiens Hardt 20, 1973), 1.

and partly because recovery from disaster had often come swiftly. This time, by implication, no recovery was in sight (38, 2–3).

To Polybius the role of the historian was not just to record, though a history which recorded events on a universal scale gained great significance from that alone. The historian's role was to judge, to put events in a wider context, and to provide lessons for the future. For that of course the historian must himself have political and military experience; Polybius had a leading role in a major Greek league. Second, he must be able to see the events he is recording in perspective and, by setting them in context, to bring out their meaning and significance. In the quotation from the first two pages of Polybius with which I began, he suggests that no one could be so indolent as not to want to understand how Rome had achieved universal domination. The significance of that domination would become clear, however, by comparison with the empires of the past:

> The Persians for a certain period possessed a great rule and dominion, but so often as they ventured to overstep the boundaries of Asia they imperilled not only the security of their empire but their own existence. The Lacedaimonians, after having for many years disputed the hegemony of Greece, at length attained it but to hold it uncontested for some twelve years. The Macedonian rule in Europe extended but from the Adriatic region to the Danube. . . . Subsequently, by overthrowing the Persian empire they became supreme in Asia also. But . . . they never even made a single attempt to dispute possession of Sicily, Sardinia, or Libya, and the most warlike nations of Western Europe were, to speak the simple truth, unknown to them. (1, 2)

In this last sentence he is emphasising a distinctive feature of Roman domination. It is not of course wrong to see Polybius as a historian of Rome and its empire. Indeed when Penguin Books brought out in 1979 a one-volume selection of Polybius, they called it *The Rise of the Roman Empire* and made the selection in such a way as to concentrate almost entirely on Roman history. However, to do that, though it has its uses, is to lose sight of Polybius' vastly wider geographical perspective of events from India to Asia Minor, to Syria, Egypt, Crete, and Macedonia. But above all it is to neglect the real historical perspective which Polybius brings to the events of his age. That is the perspective, first, of the Greek historical tradition of the classical and Hellenistic periods. It is worth reminding ourselves that these words, "classical" and "Hellenistic," are our terms, not his. They can, moreover, be seriously misleading. Within the past half-century books have occasionally been published which announce that the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.

marked the end of Greek freedom, the death of the Greek city-state, and the beginning of a new age.[7] As regards the Hellenisation of the East, there was something in this, even though that Hellenisation neither began with Alexander nor depended entirely on his conquests.[8] But that was not in any case an aspect of history in which Polybius took much interest. As regards mainland Greece, Hellas proper, it is nonsense.

For Polybius, as is absolutely clear, Greek history from the fifth century to his own time was a continuum, in which there had been many disasters but no violent break. This perspective, as we shall see, stretched back to include some mythical founders and lawgivers, like Lycurgus in Sparta, and it of course reached to the poems of Homer. But the later archaic period, on the evidence of the surviving text, did not play a large part in Polybius' consciousness; nor did the monarchies of the Near East, except by way of general allusions to the Persian Empire. His real historical starting point, or boundary, was Xerxes' invasion of 480 B.C. From that point Polybius' use of earlier history embodies an awareness of a continuous and still relevant story, all of which was of importance for the present. For instance, when he has narrated the Roman defeat of the Gauls in the Po Valley in the 220s B.C., he turns immediately to Greek examples of the successful repulse of barbarians. One of them, once again, is Xerxes' invasion; the other is the defeat of those Gauls who invaded Greece and reached Delphi in 279 B.C., a defeat celebrated throughout the Hellenistic world[9] (he omits to say that the victory was gained by the Aetolians, of whom he did not approve). His motives for making these allusions are, as usual, stated with great clarity:

> For indeed I consider that the writers who chronicled and handed down to us the story of the Persian invasion of Greece and the attack of the Gauls on Delphi have made no small contributions to the struggle of the Hellenes for their common liberty. For there is no one whom hosts of men or abundance of arms or vast resources could frighten into abandoning his last hope, that is to fight to the end for his native land, if he . . . bore in mind how many myriads of men, what determined courage and what armaments were brought to nought by the resolve and power of those who faced the danger with intelligence and coolness. (2, 35, 7–8)

7. See, e.g., N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Greece to 322 BC*, 2nd ed. (1967), 651.

8. See, e.g., F. Millar, "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 209 (1983): 54–71 (= chapter 2 in the present volume).

9. For this, see G. Nachtergael, *Les Galates en Grèce et les Sôtéria de Delphes* (1977).

What determines Polybius' perspective is both a national tradition of Greek patriotism and, as this passage illustrates, a historiographical tradition.

As it happens, the surviving text of Polybius nowhere names Herodotus, on whom of course the tradition of the defeat of Xerxes depended. The writers of the later fifth, fourth, and third centuries, Thucydides, Xenophon, Ephorus, Theopompus, Callisthenes, and Timaeus, to name only the major figures, represented for him a continuous tradition of Greek history writing, to which he constantly makes explicit reference. Indeed, his choice of the date 264 B.C., with which he opens his preliminary narrative of Roman history, before he comes to the great conjunction of events in 220–216 B.C., was determined partly by the fact that it was then that Roman forces first crossed into Sicily; and partly by the fact that it was in that year that Timaeus' *History* had stopped (1, 51, 1; 39, 8, 4). Nor was there any doubt what the proper and central subject of a Greek history should be. This is made quite clear in what he says of Theopompus' *History*, which covered the period from 411 B.C. to the reign of Philip of Macedon:

> No one could approve of the general scheme of this writer. Having set himself the task of writing the history of Greece from the point at which Thucydides leaves off, just when he was approaching the battle of Leuctra and the most brilliant period of Greek history, he abandoned Greece and her efforts, and changing his plan decided to write the history of Philip. Surely it would have been much more dignified and fairer to include Philip's achievements in the history of Greece than to include the history of Greece in that of Philip. (8, 11, 3–4)

As we shall see at the end, the tension between monarchic power, with its varied threats and possible benefits, and the freedom of the Greek cities was one of the fundamental issues which shaped Polybius' historical consciousness. There is a very real sense in which the period of Greek history within which Polybius most fully "belongs" is that which begins in the very late fifth century, and is marked by the rise and influence of monarchs, whether tyrants, like Dionysius I the tyrant of Syracuse (406–367 B.C.), or kings, like Philip of Macedon and his successors.[10] If we allow ourselves to gain a sense of Polybius' historical consciousness, we might begin to feel more sympathy for the suggestion made by Hermann Bengtson that we should use the term "Hellenistic" not just of the period after Alexander, but from the first half of the fourth century onwards.[11] What Polybius does not do, however,

10. For this theme, see esp. J. K. Davies, *Democracy and Classical Greece* (1978), chap. 8.

11. H. Bengtson, *Griechische Geschichte*[5] (1977), 295ff.

is to treat the monarchies which played such an important part in his world as being themselves objects worthy of the serious application of political theory. In that he is quite explicitly the heir of the fourth-century Greek political theory of Plato and Aristotle, to both of whom he refers repeatedly, and whose analyses were devoted to the nuclear city-state.[12] When he comes to his famous discussion of the Roman constitution in book 6, the frame of reference or comparison which he applies is first of all Sparta and the constitution given by Lycurgus (6, 10); later he returns to Sparta, once again, along with the cities of Crete, Mantinea, and Carthage. Two other candidates for consideration, Athens and Thebes, are set aside because their respective periods of dominance, in the fifth and fourth centuries respectively, were too brief, their political structures too unstable or fragile to be worth serious comparison with that of Rome (6, 43–44). In the end, Polybius makes clear, what demonstrated that the Spartan constitution was also inferior to the Roman one was the fact that it did not stand up to the strains imposed on it by controlling a foreign empire. The Spartans had succeeded in dominating their neighbours in the Peloponnese, the Messenians. But when it came, in the early fourth century, to a general domination of Greece, they found themselves compelled to be dependent on the very Persians whom they had just defeated. For they needed to ask them for the funds which their own laws, laid down by Lycurgus, prevented them from generating at home. So they made the inglorious Peace of Antalcidas (the "King's Peace") of 387 B.C., in which they betrayed the freedom of the Greeks to Persia in return for financial support. By comparison, the Romans, having sought at first only the domination of Italy, could command the resources to control an overseas empire as well (6, 49–50).

In examining the ability of a city-state to support an empire, Polybius extends the range of political thought beyond that inherited from Plato and Aristotle. So he does also in his marvellous account in book 2 (37–44) of the history of his own Achaean league from its legendary origins, to its overshadowing by Sparta and then Macedon in the fourth century, and its reemergence, recovery of freedom, and rapid extension in the third. Plato and Aristotle had not given any attention to analysing the nature of federal states. Polybius did. By his own time, he says, the Achaean league had almost become a single city-state: "They have the same laws, weights, measures and coinage, as well as the same magistrates, councillors and juries, and the whole

12. For his explicit allusions to Plato and Aristotle, see the Teubner ed. by Th. Büttner-Wobst, 5, 238 (Aristotle) and 242 (Plato).

Peloponnese only falls short of being a single city in the fact of its inhabitants not being enclosed by one wall" (2, 37, 10–11).

As has often been noted, Polybius discusses Rome also in terms of a nuclear city-state and did not devote any attention, so far as we know from the surviving text, to what moderns sometimes call the "Italian confederation." But in that he was in fact right, for the structure of Roman Italy was that of a set of alliances between Rome and individual city-states and peoples, and was no sort of league of confederation like the Achaean league.[13] Where he might have extended the range of political analysis beyond that inherited from Plato and Aristotle was in relation to monarchy. For while the resilience of Rome in the face of three major defeats by Hannibal in the years 218–216 B.C. rightly impressed him, he might well have been struck, by comparison, by the fragility of the great Hellenistic kingdoms, which would admit defeat in a war after the loss of a single battle, as Macedon did in 197 and 168 B.C., or two battles, as with those of 190 and 189 B.C. by which the Romans drove Antiochus III first out of Greece and then out of Asia Minor.

Perhaps we should not blame Polybius for this oversight, however, for even the most brilliant of modern accounts, say by Elias Bickermann or Claire Préaux,[14] have hardly succeeded in explaining what a Hellenistic monarchy was really like as a system, or how it held together at all. Confronted with monarchies, Polybius turns either to explanations in terms of personal character or to observations on the instability of human fortune. In both approaches, once again, the framework is supplied by the earlier history of Greece. For instance, when he wants to set in context the fact that Philip V of Macedon in 218 B.C. allowed his army to destroy colonnades and statues in the Aetolian city of Thermon, he reflects on the models which the king should have followed: Philip II's clemency to the Athenians after the battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C.; Alexander's care not to destroy the temples of Thebes in Boeotia in 335 B.C., or his preservation of temples in the Persian Empire (5, 10). But Philip V, he says, was either too young or had the wrong advisers, and lost the chance of gaining the good reputation which mercy would have won him (5, 11–12). Later Polybius represents Philip V, now much older and perhaps wiser, telling his sons to read tragedies, myths, and histories, and to think of the disastrous effects of strife between brothers; or, alternatively, to think of the kings of Sparta, whose success had been gained by mutual

13. See F. Millar (n. 5).

14. E. J. Bickermann, *Institutions des Séleucides* (1939); C. Préaux, *Le monde hellénistique* I–II (1978), 181–294.

concord and obedience to the laws and the ephors (the five annually elected magistrates). There was also the contemporary example of the two brothers, Eumenes II and Attalus II of Pergamon, whose concord had raised their kingdoms to greatness from small beginnings (23, 11).

When he comes to the great event with which I began, the Roman defeat of Perseus, king of Macedon, at Pydna in 168 B.C., and to the end of the Macedonian monarchy, Polybius turns back again to the fourth century and quotes a marvellous passage from Demetrius of Phalerum, the philosopher who was the effective ruler of Athens for a decade in the very early Hellenistic period, from 317 to 307 B.C. Demetrius in his work *On Fortune* had reflected on the sudden end of the Persian Empire (29, 21).

> Do you think, that fifty years ago either the Persians and the Persian King or the Macedonians and the King of Macedon, if some god had foretold the future to them, would ever have believed that at the time when we live the very name of the Persians would have perished utterly —the Persians who were masters of almost the whole world—and that the Macedonians, whose name was formerly almost unknown, would now be lords of it all? But nevertheless Fortune . . . now also . . . makes it clear to all men, by endowing the Macedonians with the whole wealth of Persia, that she has but lent them these blessings until she decides to deal differently with them.

A century and a half later, as Polybius goes on to reflect, this inspired prophecy had come true, and Fortune had withdrawn from Macedon the blessings which she had briefly given.

Such reflections were of course not unique to Polybius. By his time, they had entered Roman culture as well. So, as he himself records (38, 22, 2), when the Roman general Scipio Aemilianus witnessed the destruction of Carthage in 146 B.C., he recalled the fate of the empires of Assyria, Media, Persia, and Macedon itself, and quoted two lines from the sixth book of Homer's *Iliad* (448–49):

> A day will come when sacred Troy shall perish,
> And Priam and his people shall be slain.

For Polybius the uses of history did not always need to be on so high a philosophical level as that. Writing for a Greek audience, to record and explain the rise of Rome to universal domination, he could on occasion use cross-references to Greek history purely for dating purposes, that is, to anchor events in earlier history in a context which was, or was supposed to be, famil-

iar to his educated readers. It is worth stressing how detailed a familiarity with Greek history he seems to presume. "Who had not read," he says at one point, "that when the Athenians, in conjunction with the Thebans, entered on a war against the Lacedaimonians, sending out a force of ten thousand men and manning a hundred triremes, they decided to meet the expenses by a property-tax, and made a valuation for this purpose of the whole of Attica including the houses and other property?" (2, 62, 6–7). Whether his audience really did have an immediate recall of this episode or not, it belonged, once again, in the fourth century, to be precise in 378 B.C., at the moment of the foundation of the Second Athenian Confederacy.

When he applies Greek history to Roman history for dating purposes, he normally selects points of reference which were more familiar. So, for instance, the year of the earliest treaty between Rome and Carthage is identified not only as the first year of the annual pair of consuls at Rome, and the year after the expulsion of the Roman kings; it was also "twenty eight years before the crossing of Xerxes into Greece" (3, 22, 1–2)—that is, in our terms, 508 B.C. Or again, when the Gauls captured all of Rome except the Capitol, it was the nineteenth year after the battle of Aegospotamoi (which ended the Peloponnesian War, in 405 B.C.), the sixteenth year before the battle of Leuktra (in 371 B.C.), the same year as the Peace of Antalcidas with Persia, and also the same year as that in which Dionysius I, the tyrant of Syracuse, was besieging Rhegium, 387 B.C. (1, 6, 2). These multiple references can only have been helpful to an audience to whom the details of fourth-century history were familiar. Thanks to the Sicilian historian Timaeus, Polybius' Greek history in the fourth and third centuries also embraced the history of Sicily. One of the many revelations of his history, if we think of it as a Greek history, is that it gives us something rather rare, a perspective which is decidedly non-Athenian, and is instead, firstly, Peloponnesian and, secondly, Sicilian.

In the third century too, he can use the same anchoring device, relating the Roman victory at Lake Vadimon in 283 B.C. both to Pyrrhus' crossing into southern Italy in 280 B.C. and to the defeat of the Gauls at Delphi in 279 B.C. (2, 20, 6).

More significant, however, was the use of examples from Greek history as points of reference for historical and political judgements. Once again, such examples can only be useful if they are familiar and are charged with some meaning for their readers. For example, it might be right, Polybius suggests, to see Hannibal in the light of persons, or whole peoples, whom circumstances had caused to act variably, or contrary to their real character. For instance, Agathocles, tyrant of Syracuse in 316–289 B.C., had been

by turns cruel and benevolent; Cleomenes, king of Sparta in the third century (235–222 B.C.), exhibited similar contradictions; the Athenian people behaved differently under the leadership of Aristides and Pericles than they did under Cleon and Chares; so also did the Spartans, under kings Cleombrotus and Agesilaus, in the early fourth century (9, 23). Again, the examples extend from the fifth century into the Hellenistic period. Examples derived from Herodotus play no part in Polybius' mental framework, at least in the surviving text, which is less than one-third of the original.

What Polybius does use from archaic or legendary Greek history does not derive from Herodotus but rather from separate traditions about early Sparta and its lawgiver, Lycurgus. It is these which he applies to Rome and its constitution in book 6, and these which he also uses in interpreting the role of the great Roman general, Scipio Africanus, commander in Spain against the Carthaginians from 210 B.C. onwards:

> To me it seems that the character and principles of Scipio much resembled those of Lycurgus, the Lacedaimonian legislator. For neither must we suppose that Lycurgus drew up the constitution of Sparta under the influence of superstition and solely prompted by the Pythia, nor that Scipio won such an empire for his country by following the suggestions of dreams and omens. But . . . Lycurgus made his own scheme more acceptable and more easily believed by invoking the oracles of the Pythia in support of projects due to himself, while Scipio similarly made the men under his command more sanguine and more ready to face perilous enterprises by instilling into them the belief that his projects were divinely inspired. (10, 2, 8–12)

But the center of Polybius' historical culture was the experience of the Greek city-states from the fifth century onwards, and above all from the fourth century onwards, the period of the rise and intrusion of monarchic power. Thus, when dealing with the complex and catastrophic events of 147 and 146 B.C., which culminated in the more or less simultaneous destruction by the Romans of Carthage and Corinth, he defends his procedure in taking his narrative backwards and forwards between the two theatres of war by reference to existing histories of fourth-century Greece: "When dealing with Thessalian affairs and the exploits of Alexander of Pherae, they [these historians] interrupt the narrative to tell us of the projects of the Lacedaimonians in the Peloponnese or of those of the Athenians and of what happened in Macedonia or Illyria, and after entertaining us so tell us of the expedition of Iphicrates to Egypt and the excesses committed by Clearchus of Pontus" (38, 6, 2–3). Once again, these events, mainly of the 360s and 350s B.C., are assumed

to be familiar to his readers. The same historical background had also been deployed when Polybius first came to the issue of how the Romans acted in the final war against Carthage, and how their actions should be judged.

Polybius conceals his own opinion by the device of setting out four different opinions of Rome's conduct which were held in Greece. It should be emphasised, however, that none of the four opinions quoted is positively favourable: of the two more favourable, one held that it was a sign of prudence on the part of the Romans to destroy an ancient enemy when the opportunity offered; and the other maintained that the Romans had committed no actual offense in international law. Of the two unfavourable views, one held that the level of deceit used by the Romans amounted to impiety and a breach of treaty obligations. The other was that the Romans had previously taken their warfare only to the point of forcing their opponents to submit to their orders. But now they were deserting their former principles in favour of a lust for domination (*philarchia*) like that of Athens and Sparta and would come to the same bad end (36, 9). Here, too, the history of the fifth and fourth centuries is recalled to the reader.

But the most remarkable and detailed of all the occasions where Polybius makes use of the earlier history of Greece belongs at a previous stage in his narrative; very significantly this is at exactly the point where Roman military force first became a major factor in the life of mainland Greece. In 212 or 211 B.C. the Romans, threatened by an alliance between Philip V of Macedon and Hannibal, themselves made an alliance with the Aetolian league, the major power in north-western Greece.[15] Then in 210 B.C. ambassadors from Acarnania, which was in alliance with Philip, and from Aetolia, now allied to Rome, presented themselves simultaneously at Sparta, each hoping to persuade the Spartans to join his side. To underline the significance of the occasion, Polybius in book 9 gives each of the two ambassadors a speech which presents a view of the historic role of the Macedonian monarchy in Greece and the light in which the Roman intervention should be viewed. (There is no way of saying how far the speeches in Polybius resemble anything that was actually said on this occasion, shortly before his birth. What matters is simply what we have in the text, two speeches designed to bring out the significance of a major turning point.)[16]

The Aetolian speaks first and, as so often in the text of Polybius, goes back to the mid-fourth century, to the capture of Olynthus by Philip II and his suppression of Sparta; then Alexander's destruction of Thebes, and Anti-

15. H. H. Schmitt, *Die Staatsverträge des Altertums* III (1969), no. 536.

16. See esp. F. W. Walbank, "Polybius and Rome's Eastern Policy," *JRS* 53 (1963): 1.

pater's victory in the Lamian War of 322 B.C. He then comes to the various Successors who ruled in Greece from the late fourth century onwards: "And who is ignorant of the actions of Cassander, Demetrius and Antigonus Gonatas, all so recent that the memory of them is quite vivid? Some of them by introducing garrisons to cities and others by introducing tyrannies left no city with the right to call itself unenslaved." Finally he comes to the acts of violence which Philip V himself had committed in Greece. In the speech as preserved, apparently almost complete, there is no reference to the Romans, except to say that with their aid Philip was likely to be defeated (9, 28–31). Whatever the original speaker in 210 B.C. really said, Polybius could have used this point in his narrative to say something positive about the potential Roman role in Greece. He does not. The real issue, as always, lay elsewhere: the preservation of the freedom of the Greek cities in the face of the threats posed by successive kings and dynasties.

Then the Acarnanian ambassador gives a speech which reviews the same historical period, but from the opposite point of view. Philip II, he says, by defeating the Phocians in the Sacred War, that is, in 346 B.C., had saved the liberty of Greece. In the Peloponnese Philip had come in response to appeals and had used his power to arbitrate between Sparta and its enemies. His son Alexander had punished the Persians for their offenses against Greece and "in a word he made Asia subject to Greece." As for later crimes in Greece, it was the Aetolians who were most guilty. It was the Macedonian monarchy of the Antigonids, which ruled from 276 B.C. onwards, which had protected Greece against the northern barbarians. Even Antigonus Doson, king of Macedon, in defeating Sparta it in 222 B.C., had done so in order to liberate it from a tyrant, namely King Cleomenes.

But now, the Acarnanian ambassador goes on, it is no longer a matter of alliances between Greeks: "But now Greece is threatened with a war against men of a foreign race [the Romans] who intend to enslave her, men whom you [the Aetolians] fancy you are calling in against Philip, but whom you are really calling in against yourselves and the whole of Greece." All Greeks should beware, especially the Spartans who had once thrown into a well the ambassador sent by Xerxes to demand submission and had sent Leonidas to defend the liberty of Greece at Thermopylae. The Romans had already committed atrocities in Greece: "A fine alliance this for anyone to determine to join, and especially for you Lacedaimonians, who, when you conquered the barbarians [i.e., the Persians at Plataea in 479 B.C.], decreed that the Thebans were to pay a tithe to the gods for having decided under compulsion, but alone among the Greeks, to remain neutral during the Persian invasion" (9, 32–39).

Once again, whatever the real Acarnanian speaker of 210 B.C. actually said, Polybius certainly had the freedom to select what to put in his own narrative, perhaps even the freedom to invent appropriate words. It is surely significant that at the moment of the first substantial Roman involvement in Greece, he makes a speaker represent them as foreigners intent on enslaving Greece, directly comparable to the Persians, those *barbaroi* whose defeat was the central event in Greek history.

What I want to stress, however, is not the implicit reservations in Polybius' attitude to Rome; though nothing could be more false, in my view, than the idea that, in explaining to the Greek world how and why Rome had gained universal domination, he was also recommending, or even defending, Roman rule. What is important is the fact that Polybius' *History* really is the product of his earlier experience as a central figure in the self-governing Achaean league of cities which occupied a large part of the Peloponnese. To Polybius that part of the past which mattered, that past from which lessons could be drawn, was the experience of the Greek city-states since the victory over Xerxes. It was a continuous history, all of which offered lessons and examples that were relevant to the present. Polybius would have been surprised to learn that something called the Hellenistic age had begun in 323 B.C., and that he himself was a Hellenistic historian. He would surely have supposed that he was simply a Greek one.

CHAPTER SIX

The Greek City in the Roman Period[*]

This paper will concentrate on the imperial period, the first three centuries A.D., when "the Greek city" is more visible to us than at any other time. For it is from this period that the vast majority of the surviving remains of Greek cities date; it was in these centuries, except for the last few decades, that the largest number of Greek cities struck coins; and, above all, it was in this period that the Greek cities provided the fullest expression of their own communal identity, through the medium of inscriptions. Although there are cities, such as Athens, Ephesus, Miletus, and others in Caria and Lycia, which provide substantial numbers of Hellenistic inscriptions, in almost all cases there is a sharp decrease in the extremely troubled period of the first century B.C., the time of the Mithridatic wars and the Roman civil wars, largely fought on Greek soil. The victory of "Imperator Caesar Divi filius" (that is, "Imperator Caesar son of the deified [Julius]"), soon to add the name "Augustus," both allowed and stimulated the production of public inscriptions on an unprecedented scale. In this sense the Augustan regime marks an epoch in the history of Greek inscriptions which is almost comparable to that which it certainly signals, as Géza Alföldy has shown, in the history of Latin epigraphy.[1] In the inscriptions, as in the coins and in the physical and monumental structure of the Greek cities, the person, that is, the name and the image of the emperor, was to play an essential role.[2] How Greek cities ex-

[*] First published in M. H. Hansen, ed., *The Ancient Greek City-State* (Copenhagen, 1993), 232–60. This paper owes a great deal to the comments of the participants in the colloquium, above all those of Ph. Gautier.

1. G. Alföldy, "Augustus und die Inschriften: Tradition und Innovation," *Gymnasium* 98 (1991): 289.

2. For a brief sketch of some aspects of this transformation, see F. Millar, "State and

pressed their complex relationships to the new line of individual rulers is one of the central aspects of what "the Greek city" of the imperial period was.

In a wider sense, however, the expression "the Roman period," as regards the history of Greek cities, covers a far larger time scale, which begins centuries earlier and continues several centuries later than the High Empire. The Greek expansion into Italy, Sicily, and the coasts of Gaul and Spain in the archaic period had meant that from the very beginning Rome belonged on the fringes of the Greek world. Caere (Agylla), a few kilometres from Rome, was adopting the custom of the Greek *agōn* (contest), as a form of expiation, in the middle of the sixth century.[3] At the end of that century, as a detailed Greek narrative preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus records, the tyrant of Cumae, Aristodemus, played an important role at the time of the expulsion of Roman kings and in conflicts with the Etruscans.[4] Similarly, Roman contacts with Massilia go back at least to the early fourth century, when spoils from the Gauls were deposited by the Romans in the Massaliote treasury at Delphi, and when Justin claims that there was already a treaty between Massilia and Rome.[5] Already in the next couple of centuries, Greek cities were presented with the problem of how to construe the identity of the Romans, the significance of their claimed descent from Aeneas, and thus the nature of their relationship to themselves. These questions are, of course, already explicit in the famous inscription of the 190s B.C. from Lampsacus, describing an embassy to Massilia and then to Rome, to claim protection (against Antiochus III) on the basis of a mythical common descent.[6] Other elements of the mythical identity of Rome are reflected in a more recently found inscription of about the same date from Chios, recording the creation there of a monument representing "the founder of Rome, Romulus, and his brother Remus."[7]

By that time of course all the Greek cites of Italy had become *socii navales* (allies providing Rome with warships) of Rome, while one, Posidonia, had

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Subject: The Impact of Monarchy," in F. Millar and E. Segal, eds., *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (1984), 37–60 (= chapter 12 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* I: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*), which owes much to S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (1984).

3. Herodotus 1, 167.

4. Dionysius, *Ant. Rom.* 7, 3–10.

5. Plutarch, *Camillus* 8; Justin 43, 5, 10.

6. *Syll.*[3] no. 591. English translation in M. M. Austin, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest* (1981), no. 155.

7. See P. S. Derow and W. G. Forrest, "An Inscription from Chios," *ABSA* 77 (1982): 79 = *SEG* XXXI, no. 777. See O. Hansen, *Eranos* 85 (1987): 101.

been re-founded as the Latin colony (*colonia*) of Paestum, and another, Dicaearchia, as the Roman colony of Puteoli.[8] The Greek cities of Sicily had provided the battleground for the First Punic War;[9] while in the Second the kingdom of Hiero had come to an end, Syracuse had fallen, and the whole island had become a Roman province, with a complex network of statuses and obligations, later to be illuminated by Cicero's speeches against Verres.[10] The history of the later Greek city under Roman rule in the West—on the Mediterranean coast of Spain, on the coast of Gaul (Massilia with Nicaea and Antipolis), in Italy (above all Neapolis, still a major centre for Greek festivals in the imperial period), and in Sicily—is a major historical topic, which cannot be properly treated here. It need only be stressed, as regards the complex relations of the wider Greek world to Rome in the Hellenistic period, that this area, though certainly marginal, was never unknown or irrelevant. In Livy's narrative of the year 199 B.C., for instance, we read how a meeting of the Aetolian league was addressed by ambassadors from Macedon, who reminded the league that Syracuse, Messina, Lilybaeum, Regium, Tarentum, and Capua were all now subject to Rome.[11] By the time that Livy was writing Diodorus had already given the history of Greek Sicily, from the earliest times to his own day, a central place in his universal *Bibliotheca*;[12] while if any Greeks had ever been disposed to read Latin, they could have studied the most "Hellenistic" of all universal histories, the *Historiae Philippicae* of Pompeius Trogus, a Vocontian who surely owed his historical culture to the influence of Massilia.[13]

This is not the place to rehearse the conclusive steps which gave Rome a central place in the Greek world: first, the suppression of the revolt of Andriskos, the defeat of the Achaean league, and the establishment of the province of Macedonia, including Greece proper; and, then, the end of the Attalid kingdom and the formation of the province of Asia. But for how a Greek city would manage its dealings both with Roman governors and with the politi-

8. For a general account of Posidonia/Paestum, as revealed by excavation, see J. G. Pedley, *Paestum: Greeks and Romans in Southern Italy* (1990); for Dicaearchia/Puteoli, M. Frederiksen, *Campania* (1984), chap. 14.

9. D. Roussel, *Les Siciliens entre les Romains et les Carthaginois à l'époque de la première guerre punique* (1970).

10. For a survey of later Republican Sicily, see R. J. A. Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire: The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 B.C.–A.D. 535* (1990), chap. 1: "Background."

11. Livy 31, 29–30.

12. See K. S. Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (1990), esp. 191–92.

13. See J. M. Alonso-Nuñez, "An Augustan World History: The *Historiae Philippicae* of Pompeius Trogus," *Greece and Rome* 34 (1987): 56.

cal institutions of the city, a central place will now be claimed by the two vast inscriptions from Claros, published by Louis Robert (posthumously) and by Jeanne Robert.[14] These two inscriptions, neither complete, of the last third of the second century, still come to 275 lines (that for Polemaios) and 159 lines (for Menippos) and provide by far the most complex and detailed picture so far available of Greek cities in the period of the transfer of power from the Attalids of Pergamum to Rome. Out of many details, only one need be noted here: that by gaining the friendship of leading Romans Polemaios was able to benefit his fellow citizens (of Colophon) by creating for his native city relations of patronage (*patrōneiai*, in the plural) with the "best men."

As regards the first century B.C., we should not forget the small Greek cities which lined the coast of Illyricum, for instance, Issa and its colony Tragurion, whose embassy to Julius Caesar at Aquileia is recorded in an inscription.[15] Or, on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean, the Greek cities of Cyrenaica, which were abandoned to fend for themselves for several decades after Ptolemy Apion had left his kingdom to the Roman people in 96 B.C. This interval of involuntary independence is now brilliantly illuminated by an inscription from Berenice: after the death of the king the city was first besieged by *kakourgoi* (wrongdoers), and then, being unwalled, was twice sacked by pirate fleets. Very typically, the inscription is in fact in honour of a local benefactor, Apollodorus, who apart from his military role seems also to have gone on an embassy to the Roman Senate.[16]

A very similar situation, of acute political and military danger, necessitating political and military action to seek protection, or at least benevolence, from wherever it could be found, is reflected in the famous inscription from Dionysopolis on the Black Sea honouring a citizen named Acornion; he had performed ceremonials during the stay there over the winter (probably 62/1 B.C.) of C. Antonius, had been on an embassy to Burebista, "first and greatest of the kings in Thrace," in the interests of his city, and had also been sent by Burebista as ambassador to Pompeius at Heraklea Lynkestis. There

14. L. Robert and J. Robert, *Claros* I: *décrets hellénistiques* (1989). The passage quoted is from the decree for Polemaios, col. II, lines 24–33. See also J. Touloumakos, "Zum römischen Gemeindepatronat im griechischen Osten," *Hermes* 116 (1988): 304, and esp. the important paper by J.-L. Ferrary, "Le statut des cités libres dans l'Empire Romain à la lumière des inscriptions de Claros," *CRAI* (1991): 557.

15. See R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East: Senatus Consulta and Epistulae to the Age of Augustus* (1969), no. 24.

16. Edited by J. M. Reynolds in J. A. Lloyd, *Excavations at Sidi Khrebish, Benghazi (Berenice)* I (supp. to *Libya Antiqua* 5, 1982), 233, no. 1. See A. Laronde, *Cyrène et la Libye hellénistique* (1987), 463–64 (photograph, text, translation, and discussion).

he had taken the opportunity to represent the interests not only of the king, but also of his city. As its benefactor, in a way which was becoming a prime function of the communal institutions of the Greek city, he was to be honoured with a crown each year at the Dionysia and with a statue at the most conspicuous point in the market-place (*agora*).[17]

The story could be paralleled many times over in the complex, disturbed, and violent relations of the cities of the Black Sea region with local kings and dynasts, with Mithridates, and with the Romans. But if we are to think of what the "Roman peace" brought by Augustus really meant, one essential starting point is the whole succession of "local histories" offered by the *Geography* of Strabo. For obvious reasons of local knowledge and sympathy these gain an added force when they relate to northern Asia Minor: not only his wonderful evocation of his own city, Amaseia in Pontus (561), but also the brief vignette of the rise of Gordioucome to be the city of "Iuliopolis" (574), or his account of Sinope in the later Hellenistic and Republican period:

> The city itself is beautifully walled, and is also splendidly adorned with gymnasium and market-place and colonnades. But although it was such a city, still it was twice captured, first by Pharnaces, who unexpectedly attacked it all of a sudden, and later by Lucullus and by the tyrant who was garrisoned within it, being besieged both inside and outside at the same time; for, since Bacchides, who had been set up by the king as commander of the garrison, was always suspecting treason from the people inside, and was causing many outrages and murders, he made the people, who were unable either nobly to defend themselves or to submit by compromise, lose all heart for either course. At any rate, the city was captured; and though Lucullus kept intact the rest of the city's adornments, he took away the globe of Billarus and the work of Sthenis, the statue of Autolycus, whom they regarded as founder of their city and honoured as god. The city had also an oracle of Autolycus. He is thought to have been one of those who went on the voyage with Jason and to have taken possession of this place. Then later the Milesians, seeing the natural advantages of the place and the weakness of its inhabitants, appropriated it to themselves and sent forth colonists to it. But at present it has received also a colony of Romans; and a part of the city and the territory belong to these.[18]

17. *Syll.*³, no. 762 = *IGR* I, no. 662 = G. Mihailov, *IG Bulg.* I² (1990), no. 13. English translation in R. K. Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus* (1984), no. 78.

18. Strabo, *Geog.* 12, 3, 11 (546), Loeb trans. (with minor emendations).

Nothing could more accurately convey the sense of a long tradition, a period of acute danger and disturbance, the value placed on public buildings, or (in this case) the impact of Roman colonisation.

Equally significant, if sometimes more confused geographically, is Strabo's account of the Phoenician cities: their extremely varied fortunes during the progressive break-up of the Seleucid kingdom; the rise here too, as in Syria proper, of a generation of local tyrants, finally suppressed by the Romans; and the imposition of the Roman peace.[19] In the case of Phoenicia Strabo makes a direct and unmistakable connection between the disorders of the first century B.C. and the establishment in 15 B.C. of the colony of Berytus—Colonia Iulia Augusta Felix Berytus, which was to be perhaps the only established "island" of Latin culture in the whole of the Greek world of the eastern Mediterranean.[20]

In spite of all the problems which its composition raises, the *Geography* of Strabo cannot but serve as the most important picture which we have of the Greek world as it was when imperial rule began. Precisely two of its most important functions are, firstly, to recall how the present situation of each place could be seen in the context of a distant, often mythological, past; and, secondly, to record how so many places had faced violent external threats and internal disturbances in the first two-thirds of the first century B.C. In the established Empire it is in general true that cities, when they collectively recalled the past, tended to avert their gaze from the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, to focus on mythological origins and (if they could) on the classical past.[21] Strabo is closer in time to the most troubled period, and therefore all the better evidence for how much the imposition of peace really meant.

One place of which Strabo makes only two passing mentions is Aphrodisias in Caria.[22] It ought to have attracted his attention, however, for it too had taken part in the military conflicts of the first century. In 88 B.C., when the two communities of the "Plaraseans" and the "Aphrodisieis" still formed

19. For the political history of the Greek cities of both Phoenicia and Syria proper, see the very useful studies by J. G. Grainger, *The Cities of Seleukid Syria* (1990), and *Hellenistic Phoenicia* (1992).

20. Strabo, *Geog.* 16, 2, 19 (756). On Berytus as a *colonia*, see F. Millar, "The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations," in H. Solin and M. Kajava, eds., *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History* (1990), 10–23 (= chapter 8 of the present volume).

21. E. Bowie, "Greeks and Their Past in the Second Sophistic," *Past and Present* 46 (1970): 3 = M. I. Finley, ed., *Studies in Ancient Society* (1974), 166.

22. Strabo, *Geog.* 12, 8, 13 (576); 13, 4, 15 (630).

a joint political unit, their people (*dēmos*) had decided to march out, accompanied by *paroikoi* and slaves, to help Q. Oppius, besieged by Mithridates in Laodicea. Whether or not they had ever arrived (or had contrived not to arrive in time?), they had taken care, when Oppius was released after the Peace of Dardanus, to remind him of their loyalty, and to seek his patronage (*patrōnēa*), which he granted; he would also, he wrote, speak in their favour before the Senate and People when he reached Rome. In the Triumviral period the city gained both a treaty (*orkion*) and a long decree of the Senate (*senatus consultum*), of 39 B.C., with provisions for its free status. Everything was owed, as is quite clear, to the identification of the Aphrodite whose temple stood there with Venus, as the mythological ancestress of the Julian house. But the locus of power in Rome was changing. When the new ruler wrote (whether before or after 27 B.C. is uncertain) to tell the Samians that the privilege given to the Aphrodisians was unique, he said "You yourselves can see that *I* have given the privilege of freedom to no people except the Aphrodisians."[23] Such rights could now be seen as being at the personal disposition of a monarch.

These inscriptions are of crucial importance for understanding the Greek city of the imperial period. Firstly, as inscriptions, they *are* in fact of the imperial period. The two relating to Oppius were cut in the second century A.D.; the long series from the Triumviral period belong to the "archive wall" on the *parodos* (entry passage) of the theatre and date, as inscriptions, to the first half of the third century. Aphrodisias had in fact no classical, still less archaic or mythological, history, but had emerged as a privileged community in the last decades of the Republic. Here at least, that troubled period was not forgotten, and could not be. How significant was it, for a Greek city of the second century A.D., that such a re-cut inscription might serve to remind its citizens of one essential role of every city community of the archaic, classical, and Hellenistic period which it had now lost, namely its military function? In that respect, even if Platea might send off a contingent to assist Marcus Aurelius on his northern campaigns,[24] there could be no continuity with the Greek city of before the Augustan peace. Or might there be, none the less? The poorly recorded history of the third-century invasions shows that some cities might indeed resume their ancient military role.[25]

23. J. M. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome* (1982), nos. 2–3 (Oppius); 6–13 (Triumviral period). The phrase quoted is from no. 13.

24. A. Plassart, "Une levée de volontaires thespiens sous Marc-Aurèle," *Mélanges G. Glotz* II (1932), 231; the correct context was established by C. P. Jones, "The Levy at Thespiae under Marcus Aurelius," *GRBS* 12 (1971): 45.

25. See F. Millar, "P. Herennius Dexippus: The Greek World and the Third-Century

Equally significant, the archive from Aphrodisias is one reflection of the range of privileged statuses which emerged out of the conflicts of the late republican period, when cities sought the favour of Rome, while Rome, equally, used all possible diplomatic means to alleviate the effects of brutal oppression and exaction by grants of alliances and favours. The cities of the Greek world in the imperial period might therefore retain one or more of the following rights. (It would be extremely difficult to state what combinations of these rights were normal, or how common it was for one to be enjoyed without the others.) The possibilities were: a treaty, as enjoyed by Aphrodisias and also (for instance) by Tyre, as Ulpian's well-known celebration of it recalls;[26] *libertas* (freedom), meaning, as the imperial documents from Aphrodisias put it, that the city was "exempt from the *typos* [formula] of the province." This certainly implied exemption from the jurisdiction, and the personal visits, of the governor; but it does also seem, as is shown in Hadrian's letter to Aphrodisias, to have carried with it exemption (*immunitas*) from Roman taxation. It is not, however, possible to assert that these two latter rights could never be dissociated.[27]

Finally, there was the status of Roman colony, which almost certainly, in this early period, carried with it automatically exemption from all forms of direct taxation, what the lawyers were later to label *tributum soli* (land tax) and *tributum capitis* (poll tax). At the moment of Actium, Roman colonisation was still a minor phenomenon in the Greek world. The known cases are Tauromenium, probably in 36 B.C.;[28] Corinth, re-founded in 46 B.C.; Philippi, made a colony in 42 B.C.; Cassandrea; Buthrotum; probably Dium; Lampsacus; possibly Alexandria Troas and Parium; Apamea in Bithynia; briefly Heraclea Pontica; and Sinope (see above).

There are many uncertainties in the list, which would be considerably lengthened if we added the certainly Augustan colonies. The most notable of these are, firstly, a group in Sicily; secondly, Berytus (see above); and, finally, the important series in Pisidia and neighbouring regions.[29] We will look later

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Invasions," *JRS* 59 (1969): 12 (= chapter 13 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*).

26. *Dig.* 50, 15, 1.

27. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, no. 15 (Hadrian); 48 (legal prevention of visits by proconsul). For discussions of these complex questions, see R. Bernhardt, *Imperium und Eleutheria: Die römische Politik gegenüber den freien Städten des griechischen Ostens* (1971); *Polis und römische Herrschaft in der späten Republik, 149–31 vor Chr.* (1985); and Ferrary (n. 14).

28. So Diodorus 16, 7, 1. See Wilson (n. 10), 33–34 (suggesting that the actual colonisation took place in 21 B.C.).

29. See still B. M. Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (1967): Antiochia in

at the very significant process, characteristic of the established Empire, by which emperors came to grant the title of colony to Greek cities, without the settlement of actual colonists; for even this involved a transformation of the formal structure and constitution of each city, and (in theory at least) the public use of Latin.[30]

The "real" colonisation of the Caesarian, Triumviral, and Augustan period (the only major period of colonisation outside Italy in Roman history) should be stressed, however, for it combined with two other very well-known processes to produce marked changes in what we understand as "the Greek city": these are of course the widespread private emigration to the provinces by Roman citizens from Italy, and their settlement in Greek cities; and the steadily increasing scale of the granting of Roman citizenship to individuals, and hence to their descendants, in the Greek cities. It is not necessary here to accumulate references to modern studies of these two processes; but it may be noted simply that our knowledge of both, as regards the imperial period, is very largely a function of the sudden explosion of the "epigraphic habit," referred to above.

Taken all together, however, these processes, along with others to which we will come, meant that "the Greek city" of the imperial period would be more correctly described as "Graeco-Roman": that is, as a fusion or mélange of languages and constitutions, types of public entertainment, architectural forms, and religious institutions. The role of colonisation within this process of fusion has perhaps not been sufficiently stressed, so an example will be given from a series of second-century inscriptions from the colony of Cremna in Pisidia. In principle of course, colonies were supposed to use Latin in their public life. An important Augustan inscription from the colony of Alexandria Troas indeed shows this rule in operation. It honours C. Fabricius Tuscus, *duovir* (one of the two annual magistrates) and *augur* (priest) in the colony, who apart from a long list of military functions had been "prefect . . . in charge of public works carried out in the colony by order of Augustus" (*praef(ectus) . . . operum quae in colonia iussu Augusti facta sunt*); the inscription was put up *d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)* (by a decree of the senators).[31]

Elsewhere, however, and no doubt in Alexandria Troas too with the passage of time, Greek tended to reassert itself, while still being deployed to express those new and distinctive institutions which had been created by the

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Pisidia, Cremna, Olbasa, Comama, Lystra, Parlais. For the background, see S. Mitchell, "The Hellenization of Pisidia," *Mediterranean Archaeology* 4 (1991): 119.

30. Text to nn. 31–33 below.

31. *AE* 1973, no. 501 = *I. K. Alexandria Troas*, no. 34.

establishment of the colony. Hence for instance there is a group of inscriptions from Cremna, which come from a series of statue bases, of Herakles, Nemesis, Athena, Hyg(i)eia, and Asklepios, put up by the colony.[32] One example will suffice to illustrate the fusion of languages and concepts involved:

τὸν Ἡρακλέα
ἡ κολωνία
δυανδρία⟨ι⟩ς πενταετηρικῆ[ς]
τῶν ἀξιολογωτάτων Φλα.
Ἀουιδίου Φαβιανοῦ Καπιτω-
νιανοῦ Λουκίου καὶ Ῥοτει-
λιανοῦ Λογγιλλιανοῦ
Καλλίππου

The colony (honour) Herakles at the time of the quinquennial duovirate / of the most worthy Flavius / Avidius Fabianus Capito / nianus Lucius and of Ruti / lianus Longillianus / Callippus.

The deities honoured are all addressed in purely Greek names. But otherwise the names of the *duoviri*, Flavius Avidius Fabianus Capitolianus Lucius (?) and Rutilianus Longillianus Callippus, are almost entirely Latin, using both the lengthened *-anus* forms and the extended combination of names characteristic of the later imperial period. *Colonia* is duly transliterated as *κολωνία*. More than a century and a half after the foundation of the colony, Cremna could not be characterised either as "Greek" or as "Roman"; for it was evidently both.

Colonisation was, however, a relatively isolated example of a positive measure taken by Rome which had the immediate effect of introducing Roman, and Latin, elements into a Greek social and cultural environment. Paradoxically, it was far outweighed in its effects by the creation of new Greek cities, both by emperors and by dependent kings; foundations by both often had mixed, Graeco-Latin, names borrowed from those of the ruling imperial dynasty. The first and most prominent of the imperial foundations was of course Nicopolis, founded to commemorate Actium, created by the concentration of population, involving a re-distribution of votes in the Delphic amphictyony (the group of cities with rights at the shrine), and giving rise to a new and central element in the circuit of Greek athletic and theatrical fes-

32. G. H. R. Horsley, "The Inscriptions from the So-called 'Library' at Cremna," *Anat. Stud.* 37 (1987): 49 = *SEG* XXXVII, nos. 1175–85. The example given is no. 1176; see now *I. K. Central Pisidia*, no. 34.

tivals, the "Actia." It seems to be as early as the 20s B.C. that we have the first reflection of this new element, in the inscription from Pergamon recording the victories of Glycon at the Olympian, Pythian, Actian, and Nemean games.[33] But in spite of its name, and its new role among Greek cities, it can be argued that Nicopolis was a double community, both a Greek city and a Roman colony, not physically distinct.[34]

If it were really so, it was a rare case. More commonly, both emperors and kings spread over the map of the Greek world an ever-denser network of Greek cities, whose Greek names incorporated Latin, that is, (almost always) imperial, personal names. It is superfluous to give more than examples, since the process was detailed with remorseless care by A. H. M. Jones: Sebastē, Caesarea, Tiberias, Germanicia, Claudiopolis, Flaviopolis, Flavia Neapolis, Traianopolis, Marcianopolis, Hadrianopolis and Hadrianoutherae, and so on to Philippolis and two places called Maximianopolis, a Diocletianopolis, and of course Constantinopolis itself.[35] The real nature of such re-foundations cannot be pursued further here, for only very detailed local examination would serve to make clear how far in each case urbanisation, in various forms, had preceded the creation of the "new" city, and how radical the changes in local social structures were. We cannot always distinguish a new foundation, and the creation of a new urban structure, from the mere acquisition of a new imperial name, as when Palmyra became "Hadrianē Palmyra"; or be certain as to how much new building accompanied any such transformation, or what role was played by imperial initiative and benefaction.[36] What is clear in two well-known cases is that an imperial decision to grant the status of city to an existing community could be a response to initiative from below. Hence the letter, in Latin, addressed to a governor by an emperor whose name is lost, agreeing that Tymandus in Pisidia has fulfilled the criteria for achieving city status; in this case the availability of sufficient persons (fifty, initially) to act as *decuriones* (members of a local senate), pass decrees, and elect magis-

33. See E. Chrysos, ed., *Nicopolis* I: *Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Nicopolis* (1987). For the inscription from Pergamon, see L. Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche* (1953), no. 58.

34. For this view see N. Purcell, "The Nicopolitan Synoicism and Roman Urban Policy," in Chrysos (n. 33), 71.

35. A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*[2] (1971).

36. See esp. S. Mitchell, "Imperial Building in the Eastern Roman Provinces," *HSCPh* 91 (1987): 333, with a shorter version in S. Macready and F. H. Thompson, eds., *Roman Architecture in the Greek World* (1987), 18, a valuable series of studies on the influence of Rome on the physical character of imperial Greek cities.

trates.[37] Different criteria are set out by Constantine in allowing the claim of Orcistus in Phrygia: its previous possession of the rank of *civitas* (a city status), its location at the meeting place of four roads, a well-watered site—and the fact that the population are Christian.[38] Both imperial communications embody a general statement of favour towards the creation of new cities (*civitates/poleis*), without allowing us to determine on whose initiative such a creation normally depended.[39]

The question of construction, urban development, and architectural techniques will also not be pursued further here, except to emphasise that it was not merely colonies which we would do better to characterise as "Graeco-Roman" rather than as "Greek" cities. For even the "Greek" cities tended to exhibit a range of "Graeco-Roman" features: theatres, usually of the "Roman" type with a raised stage; temples on a raised podium, with a frontal axis; occasional amphitheatres; and more often perhaps theatres adapted to accommodate gladiatorial shows or wild-beast hunts; baths and colonnaded streets—all these represented a language of urbanism and public architecture which was shared with the generally less developed cities of the Latin-speaking West.[40]

Nor is it necessary to review here the administrative and political aspects of the role of Greek cities within the Roman Empire, or their internal constitutional and financial structure. It may be sufficient to note that the independence of the last fully self-governing *koinon* (league of cities), that of Lycia, was removed by Claudius in A.D. 43, when the area became part of the new province of "Lycia et Pamphylia."[41] The *koinon* itself continued, though

37. *MAMA* IV, no. 236.

38. *MAMA* VII, no. 305.

39. See now the new inscription from Heraclea Sintica in Macedonia: G. Mitrev, "Civitas Heracleotarum: Heracleia Sintica or the Ancient Village of Rupite," *ZPE* 145 (2003): 263–72, with C. Lepelley, "Une inscription d'Heraclea Sintica (Macédoine) récemment découverte, révélant un rescrit de l'empereur Galère restituant ses droits à la cité," *ZPE* 146 (2004): 221–31.

40. For the most penetrating study of urban architecture, drawing equally on Greek East and Latin West, see W. L. MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire* II: *An Urban Appraisal* (1986). For the widespread adoption in the Greek East of what are categorised as "Roman" architectural techniques, see H. Dodge, "The Architectural Impact of Rome in the East," in M. Henig, ed., *Architecture and Architectural Sculpture in the Roman Empire* (1990), 108.

41. Suetonius, *Div. Claud.* 25; Dio 60, 17, 3–4. The fullest account so far available is *RE*, s.v. "Lykia," supp. XIII (1973), cols. 265–308 (S. Jameson). Subsequent discoveries will allow a major new account. For the formation of the province, see D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (1950), 529.

with features which made it not entirely typical of the "provincial" *koinon* familiar from other areas; nothing of significance can yet be added to the study of these by J. Deininger.[42]

As regards individual *poleis*, it is beyond question that, while the formal constitution found almost universally was that of magistrates (*archontes*), council (*boulē*), and people (*dēmos*), the council was normally now a body whose members retained their position for life, and represented the upper class of the community; it is also noticeable, as we have seen, that it was assumed that the prospective council (*curia*) of Tymandus would be responsible for electing magistrates. A tendency towards oligarchic regimes determined by class and wealth is thus undeniable, without its being demonstrable, except in the case of Pontus and Bithynia, that such a non-democratic regime was actually instituted by Roman regulation.[43] The question of for how long the assembly of the people (*ekklēsia*) of a typical *polis* continued to meet, and what real powers it will have exercised, would deserve further examination. What is in any case certain about the Greek, or Graeco-Roman, city of the imperial period is the central place occupied by the council (*boulē*). That essential role is mirrored by the vast range of archaeological evidence for city council houses (*bouleuteria* or *curiae*), collected and assessed for the first time by Jean-Charles Balty.[44]

In any case the broad themes of the political functioning of the Greek cities, treated in the great work of A. H. M. Jones, have more recently been re-examined, as regards the period between Augustus and Severus Alexander, in a masterly study by Maurice Sartre.[45] It is particularly valuable that Sartre has been able to place the "Greek city" of this period within the framework both of the geographical and administrative evolution of the Empire on the one hand, including the role and progressive disappearance of "client kingdoms," and of a series of regional studies on the other. The areas treated are Greece and Macedonia; Thrace and Moesia Inferior; Asia Minor; Syria and Arabia; Judaea (and the Jewish diaspora); and Egypt. The Greek cities of

42. J. Deininger, *Die Provinziallandtage der römischen Kaiserzeit* (1965). For the Lycian *koinon*, 69ff.

43. For a very careful collection of the evidence, see G. E. M. de Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (1981), app. IV: "The Destruction of Greek Democracy in the Roman Period."

44. J.-M. Ch. Balty, *Curia Ordinis: recherches d'architecture et d'urbanisme antiques sur les curies provinciales du monde romain* (1991).

45. A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian* (1940); M. Sartre, *L'Orient romain: provinces et sociétés provinciales en Méditerranée orientale d'Auguste aux Sévères (31 avant J.-C.–235 après J.-C.)* (1991).

the western Mediterranean and the Adriatic thus inevitably remain outside his brief. So, more regrettably, do those of the Bosporan kingdom, which have produced a substantial crop of inscriptions;[46] those of Cyrene, whose inscriptions have yet to be collected in a corpus, but which include important items, for instance of course the five "Cyrene edicts" of Augustus; and letters of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius on membership of the Panhellenion, and on the question of where jurisdiction should be given by the proconsul of the geographically divided province of Crete and Cyrene.[47]

For obvious reasons the Greek cities of the Parthian Empire also lay outside the scope of Maurice Sartre's work. The available evidence on Seleucia on the Eulaeus (Susa), Spasinou Charax (Mesene), or the cities of Babylonia, notably Seleucia on the Tigris, as they were in the first three centuries A.D., has not increased greatly in recent years.[48] Nor has much greater attention been paid to those places which in the second and third centuries were incorporated in the Roman Empire. The most notable is of course Dura-Europos, the study of which, as it was both in the Parthian and the Roman periods, has been gravely hampered by the failure to produce a corpus of its inscriptions, in an unprecedented range of different languages.[49]

Somewhat more progress has been made with the Greek cities produced by Hellenistic colonisation in northern Mesopotamia. Long part of the Parthian Empire, they came under Roman rule with the conquests of Septimius Severus in the 190s, and many then underwent a rapid transformation into Roman colonies, producing documents in an inextricable mélange of Greek, Syriac, and Latin.[50] Like the "Greek cities" of other regions, they were carefully treated in A. H. M. Jones' great survey; but both their character as self-governing "Greek" cities and their bilingual Syriac/Greek culture

46. V. V. Struve, *Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporani (CIRB)* (1965); see V. F. Gajdukevi, *Des bosporanische Reich* (1971).

47. For the five Cyrene Edicts, see still the discussion by F. de Visscher, *Les édits d'Auguste découverts à Cyrène* (1940). For the letters of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, see J. M. Reynolds, "Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and the Cyrenaican Cities," *JRS* 68 (1978): 111. The Jewish inscriptions are collected by G. Lüderitz, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika* (1983). A corpus of the inscriptions of Cyrenaica is being prepared by J. M. Reynolds.

48. See still, for some of them, N. Pigulevskaya, *Les villes de l'état iranien aux époques parthe et sassanide* (1963). See also S. A. Nodelman, "A Preliminary History of Characene," *Berytus* 13 (1960): 83.

49. See F. Millar, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule," in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Parther-reich und seine Zeugnisse* (Historia-Einzelschrift 122, 1998), 473–92 (= chapter 16 of the present volume).

50. For these places as *coloniae*, see F. Millar (n. 20).

render them mysterious, if extremely interesting, and their history will not be pursued here.[51] But it should be noted that the history of this region is now illuminated by the publication of a new archive of Greek and Syriac documents from the Middle Euphrates of the 230s to 250s.[52]

This rapid sketch is intended only as a reminder that, fundamental as Maurice Sartre's *L'Orient romain* is, its programme is dictated by the geographical shape of the Roman Empire up to 235; if its subject had been not "the Roman Orient" but "the Greek city," it would have been relevant to explore some more marginal zones of the existence of the "Greek city"; perhaps "the frontiers of Greek city life" might be a topic, another day, for a different colloquium.

As it is, it is inevitable that if we try to characterise the most salient features of the Greek city of the Roman imperial period, we should focus on the central zone, Greece (Achaea) itself, Macedonia, the province of Asia, Pontus and Bithynia, Lycia, and to a lesser extent the other provinces of Asia Minor. Our conceptions are necessarily dependent on the survival of literature which illuminates these places, the presence of substantial bodies of inscriptions, and the existence of physical remains. In large and important areas when substantial numbers of "Greek cities" were to be found, such as central Asia Minor or the Near East west of the Euphrates (the Roman provinces of Syria, Judaea/Syria Palaestina, and Arabia), these conditions are only partially present, and historical study is only now beginning to bring some aspects of social and cultural history into focus.[53]

None the less, there is one medium by which the Greek cities of the Roman period, in all areas, expressed their identity, and whose products are available to us in vast numbers, and independently of the types of evidence mentioned above. This is of course the coinage of the cities, whose significance requires some emphasis. Ramsey MacMullen's phrase "the epigraphic habit" has justly established itself as a key element in our perception of the Roman Empire and its cities.[54] For the sheer scale of communal and individual self-expression through the medium of public writing in permanent

51. See Jones (n. 35), chap. 11; F. Millar, *The Roman Near East (31 B.C.–A.D. 337)* (1993), part. II, chap. 7.

52. See D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III^e s. après J.-C.) I. Les petitions (P.Euphr. 1 à 5)," *JS* 1995: 65–119; "II. Les actes de ventes-achat (P.Euphr. 6 à 10)," *JS* 1997: 3–57; "III. Actes divers et letters (P.Euphr. 11 à 17)," *JS* 2000: 157–208.

53. For central Asia Minor, note S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Central Asia Minor, 280 B.C.–A.D. 620* I–II (1993), and for the Near East, Millar (n. 51).

54. R. MacMullen, "The Epigraphic Habit in the Roman Empire," *AJPh* 103 (1982): 233.

form is one of the most striking features of imperial city culture. But so also is the profusion of coinage, with the extra dimension that it involved the selection of visual images to accompany the (inevitably brief) written legends. The figures are remarkable: more than 530 Greek cities or city leagues (*koina*) minted coins at one time or another, in the first three centuries of the Empire, and the largest total for a single reign was reached under Septimius Severus (A.D. 193–211), namely something over 360.[55] The result is an extraordinarily rich repertoire of images-plus-legends deployed to express the collective identity of cities; to portray and sometimes name the deities which were important to them; and on occasion to commemorate recurrent events, such as festivals, which played a central point in their collective existence, or individual events, such as visits by emperors. It is important to stress that the city coins, almost all only in bronze, were produced discontinuously; their strictly economic function, and their role within the framework of properly "Roman" coinage, in gold, silver, and bronze, awaits serious analysis. More important is the conclusion which has to be drawn from the late Konrad Kraft's study of the coinage of Asia Minor.[56] He showed that the same workshop (however we might imagine the physical reality of a "workshop") might produce coins for two or more different cities. We cannot therefore speak of "the mint" of Ephesos, or of any other city, but only of *coins* "of" Ephesos; and this term can be used legitimately only where the city (or rather community; see below) concerned is explicitly named. Deductions of the form that (for instance) silver tetradrachms struck under Caracalla, but naming no city, were produced by "the mint of Laodicea," because the types resemble those on coins of Laodicea, are wholly illegitimate.[57] We have no basis for imagining the existence of stable city "mints"; all that we can know is the coins themselves, as extremely explicit and—in artistic terms—often very refined and beautiful expressions of collective identities and values. How, where, and by whom they were actually produced or manufactured is a matter of speculation.

Until recently the best introduction to these coins, the "Greek Imperials," has been in a well-illustrated study by K. Harl of the Greek city coinages of the period from A.D. 180 to their complete disappearance in approximately the third quarter of the third century.[58] It is a pity that this fine study, con-

55. T. B. Jones, "Greek Imperial Coins," *North American Journal of Numismatics* 4 (1965): 295; see A. Johnston, "Greek Imperial Statistics: A Commentary," *RN* 26 (1984): 240.

56. K. Kraft, *Das System der kaiserzeitlichen Münzprägung in Kleinasien* (1972).

57. For these misleading presumptions, see, e.g., A. Bellinger, *The Syrian Tetradrachms of Caracalla and Macrinus* (1940).

58. K. Harl, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics in the Roman East, A.D. 180–275* (1987).

sistently trying to set this coinage in a wider social and ideological context, does not attempt to explain the reasons for its disappearance (other than the depreciation of the imperial silver coinage) or the economic effects of the cessation of local minting. But for the latter question it would be necessary to distinguish *minting*—the production of new coins—from *circulation*—the use as a medium of exchange of coins of various origins and dates.

If the economic effects of this great change are highly uncertain, the abandonment of local coining cannot fail to be seen as the loss of a crucial means of self-expression by several hundred Greek cities. In the longer term, it can be taken as an aspect of the transformation of later Greek cities from pagan communities, symbolised above all by images of their deities and of the temples which housed their cult statues, into Christian communities under bishops. But since city coining was never to revive, no Greek city in the Roman Empire ever had occasion to adorn its coins with Christian images or legends.

Our knowledge of city minting in the early part of the period, from circa 44 B.C. to A.D. 69, has been transformed by the publication of the first two parts of a really major project, *The Roman Provincial Coinage*.[59] For the first time *all* the provincial coinages of the first century of the Empire have been assessed and catalogued; further volumes (how many?) will carry the story to the cessation of minting in the later third century.

It is too early to assess in any detail the significance of this already gigantic contribution, which at a stroke transforms our ability to envisage the Roman Empire from the standpoint of hundreds of separate provincial communities. But three features stand out. Firstly, the scale and geographical range of coining. In the first two-thirds of a century of the Empire local communities in Spain and Africa might also produce coins. But by the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41–54) they fall silent, and coinage becomes one of a range of ways in which the Roman Empire gave, or allowed, a specially privileged status to Greek cities. Beyond that, the number of Greek cities producing coins increased rapidly in the third century, to reach (as mentioned above) a maximum of more than 360 under Septimius Severus. At that moment it was at least one-and-a-half centuries since any community which was not Greek, and which belonged to the Roman Empire, had minted its own coins. The exception proving the rule is of course the Hebrew coinage of the Jewish revolt and the Bar Kochba war; but at those moments, each prolonged for several years, the community concerned did not "belong" to the Empire.

59. A. Burnett, M. Amandry, and P. P. Ripollès, *The Roman Provincial Coinage* I.1–2–II (1992–).

The second feature which is (almost) all-pervasive is the name and image of the reigning emperor. Except where local eras were used, it is of course precisely the presence of this name and image which allows us to arrange the coins of any one community in a temporal sequence. The naming and portrayal of the emperor is not universal: there is a large category of city coins from all areas of the Greek East in which other images (most often of gods) and legends are substituted for the portrait and name of the emperor. Such coins are conventionally labelled "pseudo-autonomous," on the presupposition that they embody some special privilege, or special degree of freedom from Roman control: but none such can in fact be identified. None the less, it is surely significant that Tyre is both the only "Greek city" in the Empire which continued to use some non-Greek (Phoenician) letters on its coins right up to the moment of its transformation in the 190s into a Roman colony; and that it was one of only three cities (the others being Chios and Athens) which never (up to the same point) named or portrayed the reigning emperor on its coins.[60]

The presence of the name and the image of the emperor has to be taken as one of the dominating features of the collective life of the Greek city in the imperial period. This applies, as noted above, very widely to the names of the cities themselves, and not merely to those transformed into Roman colonies; to the personal names of individual citizens, in which the family names (*nomina*) of successive ruling houses—"Iulius," "Claudius," "Flavius," "Ulpius," "Aelius," "Aurelius," "Septimius"—were ever more prominent, transliterated into their Greek forms; to the cults and temples of the emperors, reigning or deceased, and individual or collective ("the *Sebastoi*"); to the identities of public buildings, like the "Hadrianic Baths" revealed at Antioch in Syria by a new document of A.D. 245;[61] to the names of months in city calendars; to the names of tribes or other sub-units of the communities; to the names of festivals; to the actual clothing of *agōnothētai* (president of games) or *archiereis* (high priests; see below); to the presence of honorific statues of emperors and members of their families; and to the prominence of inscribed letters from emperors, written in Greek, and of other inscriptions recording privileges granted to individuals by emperors. It is not too much to say that the public self-expression of the "Greek city" in the Empire embodied at every level an explicit recognition of the distant presence of the emperor. When

60. See A. Johnston, "The So-Called 'Pseudo-Autonomous' Greek Imperials," *Am. Num. Soc., Mus. Notes* 30 (1985): 89. There is no complete study of the coinage of Tyre; for the essentials, see *BMC Phoenicia* cxxiii–cxxiv, and 227–28; for these three cases, see *RPC* I, 41.

61. See Feissel and Gascou (n. 52) I (1995), no. 1.

the emperor travelled, that presence might become real; but our evidence, however biased, is enough to show that a real, concrete connection between city and emperors was maintained far more intensively by the constant traffic in embassies, whether on diplomatic missions or in pursuit of requests or disputes, to bring city decrees before the emperor, address him in person, and bring back a letter in Greek in reply.[62] As we see in the case of a letter of Caracalla of A.D. 213, even an imperial letter to an individual, referring to the obligations to his *patris* (home city) on the part of another individual, might be "read out in the theatre," in this case that of Philadelphia in Asia.[63]

The purpose of doing that was of course to publicise it before the citizens, meeting in the theatre, "where it is their custom to take counsel," as Tacitus wrote of the Antiochenes in Syria.[64] When aroused, the citizens might even gather spontaneously in the theatre, as Acts represents the *Ephesioi* doing when provoked by Paul's teaching.[65] But these allusions reflect a much more important truth about what we call, in some ways misleadingly, a "Greek city." A Greek city was not essentially a "place" or an urban centre; it was a community of individuals. The point is made with great clarity, but without further development, in an important chapter by Joyce Reynolds on "Cities" in the context of the administration of the Empire.[66] Thus when an emperor wrote, as we would say, "to Pergamon," that was not in fact how he expressed himself: his letters would go to "the *archontes*, *boulē*, and *dēmos* of the *Pergamēnoi*" (to the magistrates, council, and people of the Pergamenians); or, if "to Aphrodisias," "to the *archontes*, *boulē*, and *dēmos* of the *Aphrodisieis*" (to the magistrates, council, and people of the Aphrodisians). The point is not a trivial one, for we consistently mistranslate, and therefore misconceive, the nature of the communal attachments which gave people their identity, in the

62. This traffic in embassies is a central theme of my *The Emperor in the Roman World, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1977; reissued with afterword, 1992). For imperial letters, see the posthumously published corpus by J. H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of the Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (1989).

63. *IGR* I, no. 1619; Dittenberger, *Syll.*[3], no. 883; Abbott and Johnson, *Municipal Administration*, no. 134.

64. Tacitus, *Hist.* 2, 80.

65. *Acts* 19:29. It is worth noting the valuable survey by G. H. R. Horsley, "The Inscriptions of Ephesos and the New Testament," *Novum Testamentum* 34 (1992): 105.

66. J. Reynolds, "Cities," in D. C. Braund, ed., *The Administration of the Roman Empire* (Exeter Studies in History 18, 1988), 15: "They were, strictly speaking, 'peoples' (*populi*, *demoi*), properly designated by an ethnic rather than a place name (*Carthaginienses* rather than *Carthago*, *Pergamenoi* rather than *Pergamon*)."

eyes of both themselves and others. Confronted with "Dionysios the *Halikarnasseus*," we invariably write "Dionysius *of* Halicarnassus," as if what he belonged to were a point on the map, but it was not; it was a community of citizens.

This point is consistently reinforced by the extremely extensive evidence of communal designations on the coinage "of cities." Here too, we would be less liable to confuse ourselves if we called it the coinage of "communities." The male genitive plural is by far the most common grammatical form of identification on the coins: so, to take only some cases from the index of *Roman Provincial Coinage* I "of the Aizanitai," "of the Alabandeis," "of the Amisoi." There are exceptions, though they are far less common; occasionally we do find a place-name used to identify the origin of a coin. So, for example, from the same source "Amisos," "Gadara," "Gerasa," "Thessalonikē." But the fact that we now can, at least for the first hundred years of the Empire, read right across the entire local (or communal) numismatic production of the provinces is the first great service which *Roman Provincial Coinage* I rendered. In a profound sense, an important means of approach to the communities of the Empire, and to the "Greek city" above all, has been opened up for the first time.

I have placed a lot of emphasis on this material, precisely because in this now organised and intelligible form, it is new. But the Greek city of the Empire has of course revealed itself to us primarily via inscriptions. It is impossible to sum up the wealth of information contained in the tens of thousands of Greek city inscriptions of the imperial period, which now constitute a genre of literary expression in themselves. Instead, it may be preferable to attempt to present, and bring out the significance of, a few choice examples. The two most revealing both illustrate the mass, collective character of the life of the Greek city (or community), a point heavily and correctly stressed by Ramsey MacMullen and Robin Lane Fox in their studies on the paganism of this period.[67] But they also reflect the way in which the collective ceremonials and observances of Greek communities under the Empire gave a special place to the figure of the emperor.

The first inscription comes from a relatively little-known corner of the Greek world, the modest city of Kalindoia in Macedonia.[68] With a certain

67. R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (1984); R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (1986), esp. 27–28, "Pagans and Their Cities."

68. Edited by K. L. Sismanides in *Ἀρχαιολογικόν δελτίον Μελέτες* 1983 [1985]: 75; see *BE* 1987: no. 688, and *SEG* XXXV, no. 744.

poetic appropriateness, it dates from the first year of the Christian era, and thus forms a pair with a comparable inscription from Kyme, of 2 B.C.–A.D. 2.[69] Like thousands of other inscriptions of the period, the latter honours a *euergetēs* (benefactor) who had offered hospitality and public shows to the people; moreover "during the *Kaisareia* [a festival in the name of the emperor] celebrated by Asia, as he had promised, he carried out sacrifices and banquets where the flesh of the victims was consumed, having made a sacrifice of oxen to the emperor Kaisar Sebastos and to his sons and to the other gods."

But this document, significant only for being so characteristic of the epigraphic expression of the next three centuries, is far exceeded in importance by that from Kalindoia, which presents in concentrated form, and very early, almost all the values of Greek communal life, in its relation to the Empire. It therefore deserves translation in full:

> Year 148 [of the provincial era of Macedonia, A.D. 1]
> The city magistrates [*politarchai*], after a preliminary resolution by the members of the council [*bouleutai*], and an assembly of the people [*ekklēsia*] being held, declared before the people [*dēmos*]:
>
> Since Apollonios son of Apollonios son of Kertimos, being a good man and deserving of every honour, having accepted spontaneously the priesthood of Zeus and Rōmē and Caesar Augustus *divi filius* (son of the deified [Iulius]), has exhibited so much nobility, living up to the high reputation of his ancestors and of his own virtue, as to omit no excess of expenditure on the gods and his native city, providing from his own resources throughout the year the sacrifices offered monthly by the city to Zeus and Caesar Augustus; and has also offered all manner of honours to the gods, and provided for the citizens feasting and lavish entertainment, similarly dining the whole populace, both en masse and by *triklinia* (separate dining groups), and organising the procession at the festival so as to be varied and striking, and putting on the contests in honour of Zeus and Caesar Augustus in elaborate and worthy style . . . has shown his generosity to his fellow citizens by asking from the city leave to take over the public sacrifices offered during the festival to Zeus, Caesar Augustus, and the other benefactors, and has provided them at his own expense; and having sacrificed oxen has entertained

69. R. Hodot, "Décret de Cymè en l'honneur du Prytane Kléanax," *J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 10 (1982): 165, with the long discussion by L. Robert, *Bull. Épig.* 1983, 323; R. Merkelbach, "Ehrenbeschluss der Kymäer für den Prytanis Kleanax," *Epigr. Anat.* 1 (1983): 33; *SEG* XXXII, no. 1243.

each of the citizens throughout the whole festival, by *triklinia* and on a mass basis, and made the most lavish distributions to the tribes, so that, wherever they wished to take their pleasure, they did so by his grace. Not only has he spared no expense, but he has had a statue of Caesar made at his own cost, and has offered it as a permanent memorial of the beneficence of Augustus to all mankind; he has thus provided an additional ornament for his native city, and for the god the appropriate honour and favour.

For these reasons it seems appropriate to the council and people to praise him for the enlightenment of his spirit and of his generosity towards his native city, to crown him with a wreath and to vote a stone (marble?) image of himself, of his father Apollonios and his mother Stratto; to set up the statues and the decree in whatever place in the agora the *agōnothetēs* [Apollonios] chooses, in order that other citizens might be rendered eager to seek honour and to contribute generously to their native city.

When the decree was voted (by the assembly), Apollonios accepted the honour and the gratitude of his homeland, but relieved the city of the expense.

It was voted on the 14th of Daisios.

This very early inscription encapsulates almost all the key features of the public life of the imperial Greek city: the role of festivals and of public, communal celebrations; the importance of public writing and publicly placed images; the "presence" of the absent emperor, both as an object of worship and as visibly represented in his statue; and the central significance of the complex symbolic, political, and financial exchanges between leading individuals and the mass of their fellow citizens which made up the institution of euergetism. Given the early date, one element is missing: the progressive extension to the leading families in most Greek cities of the Roman citizenship, and, following on that the acquisition by their members of positions in the equestrian service and the Roman Senate. This steady evolution, known to us almost entirely through honorific inscriptions put up by their native cities, is familiar, and need not be re-examined here.[70] The effect was,

70. A detailed study of the equestrian roles of men from the Greek cities is lacking. See the classic sketch by A. Stein, "Zur sozialen Stellung der provinzialen Oberpriester," *Epitumbion Swoboda* (1927), 300; note also F. Quass, "Zur politischen Tätigkeit der munizipalen Aristokratie des griechischen Ostens in der Kaiserzeit," *Historia* 31 (1982): 188, esp. 198–99, for holders of equestrian posts. For senators, H. Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des z. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.* (1979); S. Pan-

firstly, that in all cities the ruling circle of office-holders and members of the council showed a steadily increasing proportion of Latin names, normally in the standard triple Roman form of *praenomen*, *nomen*, and *cognomen* (the latter very frequently still a Greek name); and with that, in principle at least, the application to their family structures and property relations of Roman private law (for instance, the father's legal authority over his extended family known as the *patria potestas*). But neither the rules of the pre-existing private law of the Greek cities nor the real extent of the currency of Roman private law can be easily understood.[71] The spread of the Roman citizenship to individuals, and hence families, culminating in the *Constitutio Antoniniana* (the universal grant of citizenship made by Caracalla in 212), was however yet another respect in which the "Greek" city of the imperial period was in reality "Graeco-Roman." A secondary effect was that those persons who served as equestrians or senators "belonged" not only to their native cities, but also to a much wider world, whose varied regions might be represented before their fellow citizens in the record of the places where they had served, incorporated in inscriptions put up in their honour.

The processes touched on above might have led to a wholesale loss, or even suppression, of the historical identities of Greek cities, and their absorption into an undifferentiated Graeco-Roman culture and outlook; or on the contrary, to a clear ideological "resistance," and to a reassertion of historic identity; to actual armed resistance on the part of cities or regions; or, perhaps, to a claim to Greek dominance within that Graeco-Roman world on which the Empire had imposed so high a degree of unity. As regards the last possibility, we have seen above that it was indeed the case that Greek cities enjoyed privileges, like coinage, or the fact that emperors and governors paid them the compliment of addressing them systematically in Greek, which did indeed mark them out from the urban communities of the West. But their status was thereby explicitly recognised, and no Greek cities, or groups of cities, offered any parallel to the major Jewish revolts of A.D. 66–74 and 132–35. It was however not merely a strategic shift towards the eastern frontier which meant that Constantine's new capital would be situated in the Greek world, on the route between the Danube and Euphrates, and would have a

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ciera, ed., *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* II (1982), 583–684. See above all, however, for the local activity of senators, W. Eck, "Die Präsenz senatorischer Familien in der Städten des Imperium Romanum bis zum späten 3. Jahrhundert," in W. Eck, H. Galsterer, and H. Wolff, eds., *Studien zur antiken Sozialgeschichte: Festschrift F. Vittinghoff* (1980), 283.

71. For a sketch of the problem, see H. Galsterer, "Roman Law in the Provinces: Some Problems of Transmission," in M. Crawford, ed., *L'impero romano e le strutture economiche e sociali delle province* (1986), 13.

Greek name. It was also a symbol of the fact that in the end *Graecia capta* did indeed imprison her captor.

As regards the first possibility, the signs of any real loss of cultural identity were indeed very few. Latin literature, for instance, seems to have gained extraordinarily little currency in the Greek East; and there is no certain evidence even of the translation of Virgil until Constantine included part of a Greek version of the *Fourth Eclogue* in his *Address to the Assembly of the Saints*.[72] Roman law, however, as taught in the schools of the Roman colony of Berytus, did, from the third century onwards, act as a magnet for the youth of the Greek cities.[73] Looking in the reverse direction, it is of real significance that the history of Rome is largely "constituted" for us by Greek writers of the imperial period, Dionysius from Halicarnassus, Plutarch from Chaeronea, Appian from Alexandria, and Cassius Dio from Nicaea.[74] The latter three were all Roman citizens, the middle two of equestrian rank and the last-named a senator and consul.

None the less, the most interesting and significant new items of evidence, or new studies of already-known evidence, of the last few years have tended to show a reassertion of historic and mythological identity in the framework of the collective life of the Greek city. But this cannot properly be seen as a movement "against" Rome (and here again the contrast with the two great Jewish revolts is fundamental). The most systematic of all these reassertions, indeed, the Panhellenion, was the work of the emperor Hadrian.[75] In more specifically local contexts, the symbolic and communal assertion of a city's identity will have been the work of its local governing class—but in the cases known to us this was a class in which the Roman citizenship, and even Roman office-holding, were already widespread. At Athens indeed, there are clear indications that actual Roman office was not sought as frequently as elsewhere. None the less, the Roman citizenship was common among the upper classes, and the resistance to the Herulian invasion of the 260s was led by a member of a family which had long held the citizenship, Herennius Dexippus.[76] Athens remained, even after the Herulian

72. Constantine, *Oratio ad Coetum Sanctorum* 19–21.

73. See Millar (n. 20), 16–17.

74. E. Gabba, *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome* (1991); C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (1971); F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (1964). See in general E. Gabba, "The Historians and Augustus," in Millar and Segal (n. 2), 61.

75. See A. J. Spawforth and S. Walker, "The World of the Panhellenion I. Athens and Eleusis," *JRS* 75 (1985): 78; "II. Three Dorian Cities," *JRS* 76 (1986): 88.

76. See G. M. Woloch, *Roman Citizenship and the Athenian Elite, A.D. 96–161* (1973); F. Millar (n. 25), 12.

invasions, a major Hellenic centre. But the most systematic communal re-creation, or re-enactment, of the past which modern study has revealed was that at Sparta. Spawforth's study has shown, however, that this re-creation, whose salient features drew tourists from all over the Greek world, did not really reproduce at all precisely the institutions of archaic and classical Sparta, and was the work, as elsewhere, of a local elite among whom the Roman citizenship was increasingly common. Note for example the inscription of the early third century in which a group of his *synarchontes* (fellow magistrates), all with Roman names, honour "Pop(lios) Mem(mios) Pratolaos also called Aristokles Damarous, *aristopoleiteutēs* [best citizen], for his protection of the Lykourgan customs, and his benevolence towards them."[77]

An equally vivid picture of the communal evocation of tradition is provided by Guy M. Rogers' analysis of the foundation of Vibius Salutaris in early second-century Ephesos.[78] Salutaris was of course a Roman citizen and equestrian office-holder; the route of the procession which his foundation instituted would take the participants down streets which had been completely transformed by monumental public building in the course of the first century A.D.; the statues to be carried included representations of Trajan and Plotina, as well as the personified Senate, equestrian order, and the Roman people; and the terms of the foundation were approved by the proconsul and his *legate*. But the prime honorand was the main deity of the city, Artemis; and the other statues included one of Enonymos, son of Kephios/Ouranos and Gē; Pion; probably Androklos, the mythical founder of the city; and certainly Lysimachos, the early Hellenistic re-founder, as well as Augustus himself. The rituals celebrated the present as the fulfilment of a long history, not an opposition between Greek past and Roman present.

But of course the primary place among all recent work on the Greek city of the Roman period must belong to Michael Wörrle's publication of the foundation inscription of a new *agōn* (contest), the *Dēmostheneia*, set up at Oenoanda under Hadrian by a leading local notable, and Roman citizen, C. Iulius Demosthenes.[79] This almost perfectly preserved inscription of 117 lines perhaps surpasses all others in its expression of the structure and values of the imperial Greek city. I will isolate only a few features. First of all, there is something of which our evidence rarely gives so vivid an impression, the

77. *IG* IV.1, no. 544. See Spawforth in P. Cartledge and A. J. Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: A Tale of Two Cities* (1989), 201–2.

78. G. M. Rogers, *The Sacred Identity of Ephesos: Foundation Myths of a Roman City* (1991).

79. M. Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien: Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda* (1988).

list of villages (*kōmai*), with associated *monagriai* (farmsteads?) in the territory of Oenoanda which are listed as being due to contribute cattle for sacrifice (lines 72–83). Then there is the detailed specification of the content of the various forms of competition, and the prizes to be attached to them, listed in the chronological sequence which is to be followed (lines 38–46):

1. Trumpeters and heralds. 50 den(arii).
2. Composers of Prose Encomia. 75 den(arii).
3. Poets. 75 den(arii).
4. Oboists. 1st prize 125 den(arii)., 2nd 75.
5. Comic Poets. 1st prize 200 den(arii)., 2nd 100.
6. Tragic Poets. 1st prize 250 den(arii)., 2nd 125.
7. Kitharodes. 1st prize 300, 2nd 150.
8. Open competition. 1st prize 150 den(arii)., 2nd 100, 3rd 50.
9. Mime-artists and acts and displays. No prizes.
10. Other acts giving pleasure to the city. 600 den(arii). in all.
11. Gymnastic competitions for citizens. 150 den(arii). in all.

The detailed specification given here makes possible, not to say imperative, a comprehensive new study of the competitive festival in the Greek world of the imperial period, in which the primacy continued to the end to be held by the ancient games of Delphi, Olympia, Nemea, and the Isthmus, together with the Actia of Nicopolis. There have been important preliminary studies: for instance the excellent collection of agonistic inscriptions published by L. Moretti in 1953; the two suggestive papers by the great Louis Robert, cited by Stephen Mitchell in his review article on Wörrle's book (with an English translation of the text); and the collection of the inscriptions relating to the artists of Dionysus in the new edition of Pickard-Cambridge on the dramatic festivals of Athens.[80] But none comes anywhere near being the full-scale study of the hierarchy of types of festival (from the major ones to the most local), as well as their geographical distribution and their allocation over the calendar, which could now be undertaken. Their geographical distribution alone would almost serve to define the world of the Greek city: from Zeugma (but *not* across the Euphrates) to Bostra (the *Aktia Dousaria*,

80. L. Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche* (1953); L. Robert, "Deux concours grecs à Rome," *CRAI* (1970): 6; L. Robert, "Discours d'ouverture," *VIIIth International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy 1982* (1984), 35; S. Mitchell, "Festivals, Games and Civic Life in Roman Asia Minor," *JRS* 80 (1990): 183; A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*², revised by J. Gould and D. M. Lewis (1968; reissued with corrections and supp., 1988), 306–7 (the inscriptions relating to artists of Dionysus).

the festival for the Nabataean God, Dousara) Gerasa, and Tyre; in Cappadocia and all of Asia Minor; in Egypt (but only at a modest local level); at Puteoli, Naples, and (from Domitian onwards, with the Greek-style Capitoline games which he founded) Rome itself; at Massilia (but also at any other western Greek cities?).

Their distribution in space was also, at least as regards the more important contests, an allocation in time, as two inscriptions from Aphrodisias explicitly state. One of them, concerned with the setting-up of a festival in a manner quite close to that at Oenoanda, seems to schedule the festival "before the [departure of the competitors] to Rome." In another, a high priest of Asia also makes regulations for a festival and lays down that it will be held "in the period between the celebration of the Barbilleia at Ephesus and [? the provincial games] of Asia."[81]

The games set up at Oenoanda, like so many others, were due to the *philotimia* (love of fame) of a local notable who was also a Roman citizen; the procedures for ratifying it involved other locals who were also Roman citizens; the terms were approved both by the governor and by Hadrian himself, whose letter opens the inscription; and images of the Emperor were to be deployed in the proceedings.

But perhaps the most telling detail in the great inscription from Oenoanda relates to the golden crown which the *agōnothetēs* was to wear, with "relief portraits of the emperor Nerva Trajan Hadrian Caesar Augustus and our leader, the ancestral god Apollo."[82] This passing allusion has much greater significance than might appear at first sight. The crown combining images of a deity and the emperor, to be worn by an *agōnothetēs* at a festival, might be taken as a symbol of that whole "Romano-Greek" complex of beliefs, customs, and communal observances which constituted the collective life of the "Greek" city in the imperial period. In archaeological terms it is also noteworthy that comparable crowns are worn by some of the local notables portrayed in the remarkable statuary from Aphrodisias of this period.[83] But, more significantly, a crown of precisely this type appears in one of the most brilliant of literary evocations of the challenge which Christianity offered to the beliefs, customs, and collective values of the Greek city, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, of which one version at least was already in circulation by the end of the second century. When Paul and Thecla reach Antioch (apparently

81. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome* (n. 23), no. 59, l. 5; no. 57, ll. 22–23.

82. Lines 52–53 (trans. Mitchell, above, n. 80).

83. For a photograph and brief account of one of them, see K. T. Erim, *Aphrodisias: City of Venus Aphrodite* (1986), 65.

the one in Pisidia), Alexander, "one of the first of the Antiochenes," lays hold of her. But she resists, tearing his cloak and dashing from his head a golden crown with an image of the emperor.[84]

The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* represents only one of a series of Christian portrayals of the life of the Greek city, of the crisis caused in it by the preaching of Christianity, and of the profound transformations which then came about. One of the most striking is the *Life* of Gregorius Thaumaturgus by Gregory of Nyssa. Written in the 380s, this novelistic portrayal of Christian preaching in the mid-third century vividly evokes the public buildings and popular festivals of cities in Pontus, and seems to be unique in explicitly portraying the establishment of a calendar of Christian martyr festivals as a conscious device to create a new "rhythm" of city life (the term used is very significant: *metarrythmizōn*).[85] That the communal structures and the pagan calendar, or "rhythm," of the Graeco-Roman city did in fact, over a period of not much more than a century, succumb to the new Christian world of bishops, churches, shrines of martyrs, and a new calendar of feasts is of course certain. Julian's short-lived attempt to revive it met with only a limited response. His last letter, written as his army marched east from Antioch in 363, might be taken as the epitaph of the pagan city:

> From Litarbae I proceeded to Beroea, and there Zeus by showing a manifest sign from heaven declared all things to be auspicious. I stayed there for a day and saw the Acropolis and sacrificed to Zeus in imperial fashion a white bull. Also I conversed briefly with the senate about the worship of the gods. But though they all applauded my arguments very few were converted by them, and these few were men who even before I spoke seemed to me to hold sound views. But they were cautious and would not strip off and lay aside their modest reserve, as though afraid of too frank speech.[86]

Looking at the pagan Graeco-Roman city of the fourth century, we might, as Oswyn Murray has suggested to me, wish to emphasise the extraordinary stability, or ossification, of culture and values which bound it to the classical Greek city of some seven centuries earlier. On this view it succumbed because it did not change, and could not. On the other hand, we might rather

84. *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 26–39 (Syriac text) quoted from Price (n. 2), 170.

85. Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi*, *PG* XLVI, cols. 893–957. For *μεταρρυθμίζων*, see col. 953. See R. Van Dam, "Hagiography and History: The Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus," *Classical Antiquity* 1 (1982): 272.

86. Julian, *Ep.* 58, Loeb trans.; Bidez-Cumont, *Ep.* 98.

emphasise its vast progressive diffusion since then, with the effect that the Greek-speaking city now provided the primary form of identity for perhaps 30 million people; the growth in size, architectural adornment, and urban facilities, such as aqueducts, characteristic of very many of them; the wider unity symbolised by the cycle of athletic and "musical" festivals; and their involvement, in many different ways, practical and symbolic, in the Roman Empire. It is no accident that the "Greek city" whose ruins we can still see was the "Graeco-Roman city" of the imperial period. But Christianity was to triumph all the same.

The preaching of Christianity was not of course the only crisis which steadily transformed the Greek city in the later imperial period. Invasions touched much of the Balkans, Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria; the depreciation of the imperial coinage *seems* (see above) to have been the factor which brought about the ending of city coinage; the sub-division of provinces tended to bring the governors closer to the individual city, and it is in any case noticeable that building in the cities of the later Empire depended more on the initiative of governors than it did on local benefactors. Equally, the tradition of euergetism seems to have been profoundly damaged by a change which the emperors themselves introduced, as a way of rewarding those who served under them. That is to say that from around A.D. 300, various civilian and military ranks in the imperial service started to be conceived of as conferring a permanent named status on their holders; and these statuses in their turn came to confer a life-long immunity from magistracies (*archai*), liturgies (*leitourgiai*), and membership of the council (*boulē*) in a man's city. The "flight of the councillors" into imperial office, so characteristic of the fourth century, was in fact an artificial creation by the emperors themselves, whose consequences they tried in vain to limit.[87]

After the conversion of Constantine and his subsequent defeat of Licinius, the new freedom and imperial backing given to Christian communities could be followed, at first slowly and erratically, by Christian attacks on temples, leading sometimes to their destruction and replacement by churches.[88] None of this meant of course that what we call "the Greek city" simply vanished. On the contrary, work at, for instance, Athens, at Aphrodisias in Caria, and at Scythopolis in Syria Palaestina has demonstrated how

87. These points briefly summarise the conclusions of F. Millar, "Empire and City, Augustus to Julian: Obligations, Excuses and Status," *JRS* 73 (1983): 76 (= chapter 16 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*).

88. See G. Fowden, "Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire, A.D. 320–435," *JThSt* 29 (1978): 53.

complex a story of communal life, and even of extensive new construction in the fourth to sixth and seventh centuries, remains to be written.[89] In the Syrian region, however, major changes in the pattern of urbanism may have been under way even before the Islamic conquests of the seventh century;[90] in Asia Minor, as the work of Clive Foss has suggested, the Persian invasions of the early seventh century may have marked a decisive change.[91] But these are as yet mere pointers. It remains the case that the "Greek city" which we can know best is the Romanised Greek city of the high imperial period, whose physical remains, inscriptions, and coins offer us a uniquely rich public "image," which still leaves fundamental questions of social and economic history unanswered. But a very different history, whose framework would be a changed relationship to the now Christian emperors, could now be written, on the basis of changing types of evidence, to do justice to the complex evolution of the "Greek," or "Graeco-Roman," city of the fourth to seventh centuries.[92]

89. For late Roman Athens, see esp. A. Frantz, *The Athenian Agora* XXIV: *Late Antiquity, A.D. 267–700* (1988); for Aphrodisias, see esp. C. Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity* (1989), and *Performers and Partisans in Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Periods* (1992). For the excavations at Scythopolis, see esp. *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 7–8 (1988–89): 15–32. Note (27) the mosaic inscription of building work carried out under the governorship of Palladius Porphyrius, probably in the fourth century.

90. See H. Kennedy, "From *Polis* to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria," *Past and Present* 106 (1985): 3.

91. C. Foss, "The Persians in Asia Minor and the End of Antiquity," *EHR* 90 (1975): 721, reprinted along with other papers in his *History and Archaeology of Byzantine Asia Minor* (1990), no. I. Note also his studies of individual cities: *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (1976); and *Ephesus after Antiquity* (1979).

92. See for instance M. Whittow, "Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History," *Past and Present* 129 (1990): 3.

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PART II

Rome and the East

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Reflections on the Trials of Jesus[*]

Introduction

If anything at all is certain about the earthly life of Jesus, it is that he was a Jew who expressed original and disturbing conceptions of what Judaism ought to mean, and was executed on the orders of a Roman *praefectus* who had little or no conception of what Judaism meant. The varied and contradictory accounts which the Gospels provide of how Jesus came to suffer crucifixion may thus be a suitable topic for me, as a Roman historian, to offer in honour of Geza Vermes, just over two decades since our joint work on the new Schürer began.

It could hardly be disputed that if we *could* recover exactly what was said and done, around the time of Passover in an indeterminate year,[1] to bring about the crucifixion, the results would be of almost limitless importance. But no such claim will be made here. Nor will the discussion take detailed account of the endless "bibliography of the subject."[2] Instead, the emphasis will

[*]First published in P. R. Davies and R. T. White, eds., *A Tribute to Geza Vermes: Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, supp. ser. 100, 1990), 355–81.

1. I do not wish to enter into this question, but draw attention to the powerful converging arguments advanced for Passover of A.D. 36 by N. Kokkinos, "Crucifixion in A.D. 36: The Keystone for Dating the Birth of Jesus," in J. Vardaman and E. M. Yamauchi, eds., *Chronos, Kairos, Christos: Nativity and Chronological Studies Presented to Jack Finegan* (1989), 133.

2. I should note here the use I have made over the years of A. Wikenhauser, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*[5] (1963), and D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction* (1970), and more recently L. T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament* (1986). On the specific question of the trial narratives, see especially E. Bickerman, "Utilitas crucis," *RHR* 112 (1935): 169 = *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* III (1986), 82; A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (1963); P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*[2] (1974); O. Betz, "Probleme des Prozesses Jesus," *ANRW* II, 25.1 (1982), 565.

be, first, on examining the general characteristics of the Gospels, viewed as biographical narratives (which is what they are, however "kerygmatic" their intentions). This discussion will suggest some reasons why, if any one of the Gospels can bring us closer to the historical context and overall pattern of Jesus' activities than the others, it is John rather than any of the Synoptics;[3] while, of the Synoptics, it is Luke who has the weakest grasp on the realities of Palestine under Roman domination. It is essential to stress that those realities provide the only touchstone for what *may* be veridical in any of the trial narratives, as in the Gospel narratives as a whole. These realities are genuinely accessible, to a significant degree, because—and only because—of the works of Josephus. In the case of Josephus we know who he was, what his place was in the Jewish history of his time, what he wrote, when, where, and to a large degree why. Not one of those questions can be answered with any confidence for any one of the Evangelists. None the less, it is highly relevant to note that Josephus' *Jewish War*, *Antiquities*, and *Life* were themselves written in Rome in the 70s, 80s and 90s; a work can truly spring from the Judaea of before A.D. 70 without having been written either there or then.

The evidence of Josephus enables us to say *not* which of the Gospel accounts is "true," but, firstly, what is significant about the differences between them; and, secondly, which of the things narrated by them could have been true, and conversely which could not. To take one example: the two birth narratives, of Matthew and Luke, are wholly different, and mutually incompatible; but Matthew's account fits with historical reality and *could* be true in its broad outlines, while Luke's does not, and cannot be true. This distinction does not lose its significance even if we conclude, as I believe we must, that in fact neither is true.

If we then turn to the trial narratives themselves, we may be able to find reasons why some are likely to be false, because they do not fit with what we know from more secure evidence. And we may also be able to show that one is plausible, that it does "fit." But that is not the same thing as proving it to be true. For it lies in the nature of arguments from coherence that we can never confidently distinguish between an essentially veridical narrative, based on first-hand reports, and a convincing reconstruction—or fiction—whose author respected historical realities. We cannot know "what happened"; but we can certainly gain a clearer idea of the significance of the differences between the several accounts we are given.

3. My use of, and emphasis on, John clearly owes much to C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (1963), and to J. A. T. Robinson, *The Priority of John* (1985). See now M. Hengel, *The Johannine Question* (1989).

That we are given quite different accounts is, of course, well known. For a start, in the Synoptics the Last Supper is a Passover meal at which the paschal lamb is eaten, and in John it is merely a meal on the evening before Passover. We may not be able to prove which, if either, of these versions is true, though some reasons will be advanced below for preferring John's version. But what is logically beyond dispute is that they cannot both be historically true; and therefore that at least one of them is false. I make no apology for placing so much weight on the question of literal, non-metaphorical, non-theological, mundane truth or falsehood; for that after all is what historians are for.

The Gospels as Biography and History

Before offering a view on the fundamental question of historical truth, it is essential, however briefly, to look at the Gospels overall when considered as biographical narratives. I assume in the following discussion that the conventional view that Mark's Gospel is the earliest of the Synoptics is correct; but also that Matthew represents a development of Mark, and that Luke has probably used both; and that John is independent. The trial narratives themselves, which represent so prominent a part of the structure of each of the Gospels, lend strong support to these views.

I take up no position on the sources of the Gospels, or on the question of the absolute date when any one of them was written, or even on whether they were written before or after the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70. All that seems to me to be certain of all four is that they could not have come to be as they are without their deriving in some sense, direct or indirect, from an environment in which the geography and social structure of pre-A.D. 70 Palestine was familiar; and, more important, an environment in which the *concerns* of pre-70 Jewish society were still significant, whether we think of the high priests and "the Sanhedrin," of Pharisees and Sadducees, of the relations between Galilee, Samaria, and Judaea, or of the centrality of the Temple and of pilgrimage to it, and of the major festivals celebrated there, Passover above all. In a profound sense, the world of the Gospels *is* that of Josephus. But there remains one major puzzle, to which too little attention has been directed: in the Synoptic Gospels two groups called *grammateis* (scribes) and *presbyteroi* (elders) play a major role. But these terms, in the plural, as designations of apparently definable groups, are unknown to Josephus' accounts of the period, in the *War* and the *Antiquities*; it may therefore be significant that they are also unknown to John. With that exception, and allowing for very considerable variations between them,

the Gospels all "belong" in pre-A.D. 70 Palestine, and must in some sense derive from it. Within that wider framework it must be firmly asserted that the Gospels *are* biographical narratives; Matthew and Luke follow the life of Jesus from birth to death; Mark and John do so from his recognition by John the Baptist until death. The two pillars on which the structure of all four narratives rest are therefore, firstly, John the Baptist and his proclamation of Jesus and, secondly, the Passion narratives.

Only Matthew and Luke take the story back to the birth of Jesus, and do so in wholly different and incompatible ways. But we cannot understand the *significance* of this comparison unless we hold fast to the historical framework of the later years of Herodian rule and the early stages of Roman rule in Judaea, as provided by Josephus.[4] If we use this framework, we find that Matthew presents an entirely feasible succession of events. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the King (2:1), therefore not later than spring of 4 B.C. In fear of Herod, Joseph took the family to Egypt (2:14), which since 30 B.C. had been a Roman province. When Herod died (4 B.C.), an angel prompted Joseph to return to the land of Israel; but hearing that Herod's son Archelaus was ruling in Judaea, as he did from 4 B.C. to A.D. 6, Joseph was afraid. So he went instead to Galilee, and settled in Nazareth (2:23). The implication is that Archelaus was not ruling there, which is correct. It is not, however, explicitly stated at this point that the ruler there was Archelaus' brother, Herodes Antipas, who was in fact in power there from 4 B.C. to A.D. 37. Indeed it is not until 14:1–12 that "Herodes the tetrarch" (his correct title) makes his first and only entrance, with a reference back to his execution of John the Baptist. So the historical framework is only partially reflected; all the same the underlying presumption that there was more to fear in Judaea under Archelaus than in Galilee under Herodes Antipas is borne out by Josephus' accounts of the two reigns.

The purpose of the story is to explain how Jesus, later to emerge from obscurity as a man from Nazareth, both belonged to the line of David (hence the genealogy in 1:1–17) and had in fact duly been born in Bethlehem (2:1–6).

Luke's birth narrative has the same purpose, but sets about fulfilling it quite differently. Even his genealogy, which he does not introduce until chapter 3, disagrees with Matthew's, beginning in the generation before Joseph; but it too includes King David (3:23–38). More important, having begun by locating the story "in the days of Herod the king of Judaea" (1:5),

4. For the historical framework and datings, and above all the crucial question of the census of A.D. 6, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 326–27.

he continues with the episode of Zechariah and Elizabeth, coming only in 1:26 to Mary and her fiancé Joseph, "from the house of David," but settled in Nazareth in Galilee. The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is brought about by the proclamation of the census, requiring all to go to be registered, each to his own city (2:1). So Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem "since he belonged to the house and kindred of David."

Unfortunately the story is a historically impossible construct, which makes use of the long-remembered and traumatic moment when in A.D. 6, ten years after Herod's death, and following the deposition of Archelaus, Judaea became Roman provincial territory, and the Roman census, a complete novelty, was imposed. A resistance movement flared up, and was repressed with difficulty. Luke is quite unaware of this precise context. But he has also forgotten something much more significant. Neither in A.D. 6 nor at any other time in the life-time of Jesus was Galilee under Roman rule, or subject to the census. Furthermore, as we know from a much-quoted papyrus of A.D. 104, the Roman census in fact required people to return, not to their ancestral home, but to their normal place of work and residence, which in the case of Joseph would have been Nazareth.[5]

We need not pursue the argument further. Both birth narratives are constructs, one historically plausible, the other wholly impossible, and both are designed to reach back to the infancy of Jesus, and to assert his connection with the house of David (as it happens, almost the only characteristic of the earthly Jesus alluded to by Paul, Rom. 1:2) and his birth in Bethlehem. For if it could be known at all from where the *Christos* would come (for some doubts on this see Jn. 7:27), then it ought surely to have been Bethlehem; the expectation is underlined most clearly of all in John (7:41–43): "And they said, 'Surely the *Christos* does not come from Galilee? Has not Scripture said that it is from the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was, that the *Christos* comes?' " John does not claim that in this respect prophecy had been fulfilled; and it is he alone of the Evangelists who confronts this failed expectation.

This is not the place to attempt to examine in detail the different accounts in the Gospels of the various episodes of Jesus' ministry between his recognition by John and his journey to Jerusalem, arrest, "trial," and crucifixion. Such a detailed discussion would serve no purpose, for, as mentioned above, all four Gospels show every sign of deriving, directly or indirectly, from the real historical environment of Jesus' preaching, in Galilee, Peraea, in the territory of Caesarea Philippi, and of Tyre and Sidon, and en route between

5. *P. Lond.* 904, lines 18–38; *Sel. Pap.* II, no. 220.

Galilee and Jerusalem. But it is essential to state firmly that we cannot amalgamate the four accounts to construct a "life of Jesus." We could attempt to do so with the three Synoptics, but not with John, because the structure of his narrative is fundamentally different. For the Synoptics, there is only one journey to Jerusalem, that for the final Passover, the occasion of the crucifixion. Their narratives thus lead from Galilee and its environs to a single climax, namely the one pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover. As such, this is entirely convincing. Josephus' two narratives of the period give ample evidence that Passover was indeed the main national pilgrim festival, when vast crowds assembled, from Galilee not least, and when disturbances could be anticipated.[6]

This concentration on a single climactic visit has its effect also on the details of the Synoptic narratives. So, for instance, in Jesus' life-time the Roman census was imposed, and Roman taxation was payable, in Judaea but not in Galilee, a fact which, as we have seen, Luke's birth narrative overlooks. The question of payment remained a burning issue. So all three Synoptics represent the trick question about whether to pay "the census" as having been posed in Jerusalem, necessarily in the period before the last Passover (Mk. 12:13–17; Mt. 22:17–22; Lk. 20:21–26). It is also in this context that they must place the cleansing of the Temple (Mk. 11:15–17; Mt. 21:12–13; Lk. 19:45–46). But in John this episode belongs in a quite different context. For just as his trial narrative is structured round Pilate's movements between Jesus, inside the *praetorium* (the residence of the Roman *praefectus*), and his Jewish accusers outside, as we shall see, so his narrative of Jesus' preaching is structured round a whole series of Jewish festivals, proceeding in what looks like an appropriate sequence through at least something more than one year, and each necessitating an ascent from Galilee to Jerusalem. The sequence begins with a first Passover, almost the earliest episode in Jesus' activity as a preacher, being preceded only by the marriage at Cana (2:1–11), an item unique to John. (Cana was a real village in Galilee, where Josephus once stayed on campaign in A.D. 67 [*Vita* 86]; unfortunately he does not report having heard there any interesting local tales.) It is thus very early in the narrative that John represents Jesus as going up to Jerusalem for "the Pascha of the *Ioudaioi*," cleansing the Temple, meeting "a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, an *archon* [magistrate] of the *Ioudaioi*," who is to reappear later after the crucifixion (19:39), and then going out into the countryside of Judaea (2:13–3:21). On his way back he has to pass, as Galilean pilgrims often did,[7] through

6. See, e.g., *BJ* 2, 10–13; 2, 224–27; 2, 280–83; 6, 422–27; *Ant.* 17, 213–18; 20, 106–12.

7. See, e.g., *BJ* 2, 232–33; *Ant.* 20, 118–21.

the territory of Samaria. The picture then offered of Samaritan beliefs and attachment to their sacred mountain (Mount Gerizim) is the most detailed in any of the Gospels (4:1–42) and is vividly matched by Josephus' description (*Ant.* 18, 85–87) of an episode which belongs very soon after the time of Jesus' preaching: a local man persuaded a large group to ascend Mount Gerizim in the hope of finding there sacred vessels buried by Moses; but the movement was suppressed by a force sent by Pilate. The episode is followed by the dismissal of Pilate, apparently in the winter of A.D. 36/7.

In John's narrative Jesus now returns to Galilee, but his work is interrupted by a "festival of the *Ioudaioi*" (5:1), perhaps Pentecost (though the words could refer to the Passover of the next year), and Jesus goes up again to Jerusalem, where he heals a lame man lying at the pool called Bethesda and is blamed for doing so on a Sabbath (5:2–47). After his reply, and with no transition, he is found going away across "the sea of Galilee to Tiberias" (6:1, with 6:23 the only reference to this new city in the Gospels). He then ascends a mountain; but here the chronological sequence may be in some way distorted, for John says (6:4) that "the *Pascha*, the festival of the Jews" was near. There is no further reference to Passover in the long section which follows (6:5–71). This must be either a displacement, or a scribal or authorial error, or we have shifted forward a whole year (or even two years altogether, if the two allusions to a "festival of the Jews" [5:1 and 6:11] should be taken as referring to two successive Passovers). But to solve the problem in that way would be to indulge in an inappropriate literalism. It is perhaps more likely that there is some mistake here, and that John is intending to portray Jesus' preaching and his movements from Galilee up to Jerusalem and back within the framework of a cycle of festivals covering just over one year. If that is so, then it is appropriate that we come in 7:1–2 to Sukkot/Tabernacles. Jesus is preaching in Galilee, for he fears to go to Judaea. But his followers urge him to go none the less, for "the festival of the Jews, *skenopēgia* [Sukkot]" is approaching. Jesus then does go, first clandestinely, then teaching openly in the Temple during the festival. No features of this festival are explicitly reflected in this section (7:1–52), except for an allusion to the last day, as being the climax (7:37); but the atmosphere of a popular festival centred on the Temple is felt throughout. It is worth recalling that, in a year which is probably A.D. 24, almost contemporary with Jesus' preaching, the Jews of Berenice in Cyrenaica held an assembly at which they voted honours to a Roman official "at the time of the public assembly [*syllogos*] of the *skenopēgia*" (*IGR* I, 1024).

As was mentioned above, we cannot regard the fact that the Synoptics represent Jesus as going up to Jerusalem only for one Passover as itself a strong argument for preferring John; for it is indisputable that Passover was indeed

the major national pilgrim festival. None the less John's representation of Tabernacles as being a strong reason for going up to Jerusalem clearly accords with our other evidence. Josephus emphasises the special importance of the festival (*Ant.* 15, 50–52) and the requirement to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate it for eight days (*Ant.* 3, 244–471); but, apart from the rules for the festival given by Philo,[8] perhaps the most striking of all testimony to its significance in this period is Josephus' casual reference to the fact that in A.D. 66 Cestius Gallus was able to capture Lydda with ease, because the entire population had gone up to Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles (*BJ* 2, 515).

It is also in the context of this celebration of Tabernacles that John represents differences breaking out over the inappropriateness of a *Christos* coming from Galilee, and not from Bethlehem; and it is also here that the arrest and examination of Jesus is first concretely foreshadowed, for their attendants report about him to the *archiereis* (high priests) and *Pharisaioi*, who reproach them for not bringing Jesus with them. We may recall a profoundly relevant episode which, as Josephus records (*BJ* 6, 300–309), took place at Tabernacles in A.D. 62, when a peasant, also named Jesus, began to prophesy in public against Jerusalem and the Temple, was arrested by the *archontes* (magistrates), brought before the then Roman governor, Albinus, flogged, cross-questioned, and finally released as a lunatic.

In John's narrative there follows a long section representing Jesus' preaching and healing, with no explicit indication of his either staying in Jerusalem or leaving it ([18:1–11]; 8:12–10:21). But then there comes a festival described as *ta enkainia* (festival of restoration), in Jerusalem. It can only be Hanukkah, for the meaning, "renewal," is the same, and we are in winter (8:22); Jesus spends his time at the Temple, in the "Stoa of Solomon." We know from Josephus that this festival was celebrated for eight days but not how it was celebrated, except (in general terms) with hymns, sacrifices, and popular rejoicing (*Ant.* 12, 323–25). Jesus again runs into danger, this time the threat of stoning by the mob, and escapes. He then leaves Jerusalem to cross the Jordan to the spot where John had first baptized him, and is called back to raise Lazarus from his tomb at Bethany near Jerusalem (10:40–11:46). It is this miracle which provokes an initial *synhedrion* (meeting) of the high priests and Pharisees, at which they resolve to put Jesus to death for fear of the Roman reaction if all the people were to follow him. Caiaphas makes his first appearance, described as "*archiereus* [high priest] of that year," and utters the proposition that one man should die for the sake of the people. This thought,

8. Philo, *De Spec. Leg.* 1, 189; 2, 204–13.

John says, was in reality an inspired prophecy; for Jesus would die not only on behalf of the people, but so that he might gather together the scattered children of God (11:47–52). The last Passover is approaching, and large numbers are going up to Jerusalem in advance of it in order to purify themselves (11:55). Meanwhile Jesus goes off to the desert, then to Bethany again, and then makes his formal entry to the city (11:54–12:12).

What is beyond question is, first, that John presents to the reader an incomparably more detailed and circumstantial picture of Jewish life in Palestine, punctuated by the annual rhythm of the festivals, than do the Synoptics. He also represents the earthly activity of Jesus as reaching a series of preliminary climaxes in Jerusalem, in close association with these festivals. As indicated above, there is no way, logically speaking, in which we can distinguish between a "true" narrative and one which is plausible and evidently related to a historical and social framework known from other evidence. On the one hand, *either* we must abandon altogether even the attempt to decide questions of literal truth; *or* we must conclude that nothing in any Gospel has any claim to truth; *or* we must choose. Either Jesus went only once to Jerusalem, for the fatal Passover, or he went several times, for a succession of festivals. Either we have no evidence at all which offers us any access to the earthly life of Jesus, or we must choose between John and the Synoptics. The only criterion of truth in the Gospels which a historian can offer is conformity with the world as portrayed by Josephus, and what we have in John may be no more than a convincing fiction. But, as we must choose, I suggest that the narrative of Jesus' ministry which brings us closest to the real world of first-century Palestine is that of John.

This suggestion can be no more than that. It is not only that we cannot prove, or disprove, the literal truth of any statements in the Gospels, or demonstrate the validity of one narrative structure as against another. Nor can we ever escape from our inability to distinguish a true story from a convincing literary construction. But since we can hardly fail to *wish* to know more about these events, whether we see them as embodying a divine revelation, or merely the most important single turning point in world history, we both may and should form hypotheses about where we should begin in thinking about the life of Jesus. All of the available accounts give a very large place to the story of how he came to be crucified. I will therefore suggest that if we wish to consider these narratives, we should be open to the hypothesis that the one to which we should give preference is that of John.

The Trial Narratives

As already suggested, the trial narratives occupy a central place in the structure of all four Gospels. Both in scale and in coherence they have to be taken as representing a significant aspect of what the Gospels, conceived of as narratives, are. It is also quite possible, though it cannot be proved, that they represent the earliest narrative sections to come into existence; on this hypothesis the Gospels, as biographical narratives, will have grown backwards. It is noticeable, as we have seen, that only two of them stretch back to Jesus' birth, both in unconvincing ways, though Luke much more unconvincingly than Matthew.

As is well known, the trial narratives also present profound and irreconcilable differences, Mark/Matthew from Luke and, much more profoundly, all three Synoptics from John. The differences centre both on the timing of the Last Supper and the crucifixion, and, in ways which need more emphasis than they have received, on the *significance* of Passover as a factor which determines how the events unfold. In the Synoptics the Last Supper is a paschal meal eaten on the first night of Passover, the examinations of Jesus take place during that night and in the following morning, and the crucifixion follows on the first day of the festival. In John all this happens one day earlier, and the beginning of Passover, on the evening of the day of the crucifixion, is still expected.

Not all the features of the celebration of Passover as it was in the first century A.D., while the Temple still stood, need to be considered here; and many aspects in any case remain somewhat obscure.[9] But certain points are crucial. First, Josephus makes clear that the people would begin to assemble some six days before the festival, on the 8th of Nisan (*BJ* 6, 209); we have already seen this reflected in John's narrative when "many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the *Pascha*, so that they might purify themselves" (11:55). Just after this a precise date is given: six days before the *Pascha* Jesus goes to Bethany (12:1).

Passover proper began on the evening of 14th Nisan, though it seems clear that to accommodate the enormous number of private sacrifices now offered by the people in groups, the long sequence of sacrifices had in fact moved back into the afternoon of that day, long before sunset.[10] Indeed the festi-

9. I rely on the very interesting, if not always entirely clear or conclusive, discussion by J. B. Segal, *The Hebrew Passover from the Earliest Times to A.D. 70* (1963).

10. For the conduct of the sacrifices in daylight, during the afternoon of 14th Nisan, see Segal (n. 9), 233, using *Jub.* 49. For the process of sacrificing in groups, amounting to

val cast its shadow even further back, for all of 14th Nisan counted as a day of preparation;[11] as we will see, John twice described this day as *paraskeuē* (preparation, 19:14 and 31). He may also single out the first day of the festival, when the *pascha* was eaten, from the (originally separate) days of unleavened bread which followed. That depends on how we read a crucial phrase in 19:31 (see below). But in any case the later phase of Passover need not concern us. What is, however, crucial is the question of purification, stressed (see below) both by Ezra and by Philo, and apparently affecting all participants, and not just priests. In the same passage in which Josephus gives the total of participants at Passover of (probably) A.D. 66, he too stresses the exclusion of anyone suffering from any form of impurity.[12]

These broad principles, which clearly ignore many finer points, may provide a sufficient framework for understanding the highly significant differences between the various Gospel narratives.

Mark

Mark's account begins with a Last Supper which takes place on the first night of Passover and has as its purpose the eating of the *pascha* (14:12–25), and continues with the arrival of Judas at Gethsemane, accompanied by an armed mob "from the high priests [*archiereis*] and the scribes [*grammateis*] and the elders [*presbyteroi*]" (14:43). Jesus is then led to the high priest (*archiereus*), and all the high priests, elders, and scribes assemble. The scene is the house of the high priest, where Peter is warming himself. Inside, the high priest and "all the council [*synhedrion*]" hear testimonies against Jesus in order to kill him (14:55). Two questions are specifically addressed to Jesus, about his proclamation that he would destroy the Temple, and about his claim to be the *Christos*, which Jesus admits, emphasising his claim with a quotation from Daniel (7:13).

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vast numbers of individuals in all, see Josephus, *BJ* 6, 423–26. On Josephus' account, at Passover of (apparently) A.D. 66, 295,600 victims were sacrificed on behalf of groups of ten to twenty each, these sacrifices being carried out between the ninth and the eleventh hour, hence towards evening, but before sunset.

11. For this point, cf. Segal (n. 9), 245, which does not however cite any very clear evidence. The term *paraskeuē* is attested as meaning "the day before Shabbat," e.g., Josephus, *Ant*. 16, 163, but so far as I know not elsewhere unambiguously in relation to a festival. But (see below) Jn. 19:14 uses "*paraskeuē* of the Pascha."

12. *BJ* 6, 425–26: "all pure and holy. For those afflicted with leprosy or gonorrhoea, or menstruating women, or persons otherwise defiled were not permitted to partake of this sacrifice." See S. Safrai, "The Temple," in *Jewish People in the First Century* II, 865ff., on 891–92.

This scene takes place at night, and at dawn Peter makes his denial, and a cock crows (14:66–72). Immediately in the morning, having taken council, the high priest with the elders and scribes and the whole council bring Jesus bound before Pilate, who asks him a different question, "Are you the king of the Jews?" The high priests make further accusations, receiving no reply (15:1–5). There follows an episode involving the custom of releasing a prisoner on the occasion of Pesach, the crowd's demand for the release of Barabbas, "imprisoned with his insurgents [*stasiastai*], who had committed murder in the uprising [*stasis*]," Pilate's dialogue with the crowd, its demands for the crucifixion of Jesus, the release of Barabbas, and the delivery of Jesus for crucifixion. Jesus, now apparently outside, is taken within the house or *praitōrion* (*praetorium*), abused by the soldiers, and led off (15:16–20). Simon the Cyrenaican is commandeered en route, the procession reaches Golgotha, and the crucifixion takes place at the third hour, the cross being inscribed "The king of the Jews," in what language is not stated (15:21–32).

The whole account, from the arrest to the inscription on the cross, occupies fifty-six verses, or a little over one chapter. It involves two examinations of Jesus, one at night in the house of the high priest and one in the early morning in the residence, or *praitōrion*, of Pilate; but it represents no formal trial or verdict. The phrase which Mark uses of deliberations in the morning, *symboulion poiēsantes* (15:1), might indeed be read as meaning "having held a council meeting"; but where he uses it elsewhere it means no more than "took counsel" or even "conspired" against Jesus (3:6). Pilate's order for crucifixion is prompted by the demands of the crowd.

Matthew

Matthew's account has an almost exactly similar structure, beginning with a Last Supper for the eating of the *pascha* (26:17–29). The mob which arrests Jesus, however, comes from the high priests and elders of the people (*laos*). The high priest to whose house Jesus is brought is identified as Caiaphas, and this time the high priests are omitted from the list of those who assemble there (who are described as "the scribes and the elders," 26:57). None the less, those reported as seeking false testimony against Jesus are then described as "the high priests and the whole council" (26:59). The reported dialogue is closely similar, and it is followed *again*, at dawn, by the taking of counsel by the high priests and the elders of the people, who bring Jesus bound before Pilate (27:1–2). After a complete inserted episode relating to Judas and the thirty pieces of silver (27:3–10), Jesus appears before Pilate and is again asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?" The episode of Barabbas follows, with the

extra detail of Pilate's being seated on his tribunal (27:19), with the anecdote of his wife's dream, and the detail of his washing his hands (derived from Deut. 21:6–7). The rest follows as in Mark, except that the reported inscription on the cross is longer: "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews" (27:37).

The narration is thus a little fuller, with extra details, and occupies sixty-four verses, or a matter of a chapter and a half. The structure is identical: two examinations, neither in the form of a trial concluded by a verdict, and an order for crucifixion prompted by the demands of the crowd.

Luke

Luke's account similarly follows a Last Supper which involves the eating of the paschal lamb (22:14–38), and begins with the arrival on the Mount of Olives of Judas with a "crowd" (*ochlos*), not otherwise identified (22:47). When Jesus addresses them, however, they turn out to be (or to include) high priests, captains (*stratēgoi*) of the temple, and elders. They take Jesus to the house (*oikos*) of the high priest, who is not named. Peter's denial follows (22:55–62), but the structure of the narrative then becomes crucially different. For when dawn breaks a formal council of the people (*to presbyterion tou laou*) is convened: "high priests and scribes, and they took him to the *synhedrion*" (22:66). The shift is crucial in two different ways. Firstly, Luke transfers to here Jesus' reply to the question as to whether he is the *Christos*, and his answer quoting Daniel. Secondly, this passage is the only one in the four Gospels which seems to represent a formal meeting of the body normally known in modern literature as "the Sanhedrin." This concept has its problems, as we will see below; and the term *presbyterion* is used of "the Sanhedrin" only by Luke himself (otherwise in Acts 22:5). However, Luke clearly intends to differentiate between an examination at night in the house of the high priest and some sort of formal meeting of a council in the morning. None the less, even here, no concluding verdict of the meeting is represented.

Luke continues by specifying, as neither Mark nor Matthew does, exactly what accusations were put forward when Jesus was brought before Pilate: "We have found this man disturbing our people, preventing them from giving tribute to Caesar and calling himself *Christos Basileus*" (23:2). However, Pilate asks the same question, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Luke then gives a unique twist to the story by having the high priest (and the crowd?) say that Jesus has been upsetting the people, teaching throughout Judaea, beginning from Galilee. This prompts Pilate to ask if Jesus is a Galilean, and, on discovering that he is, to send him for examination to Herodes (i.e., Herodes Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea), who happens to be in Jerusalem.

Herodes examines him, and sends him back to Pilate (23:5–12). There is no inherent improbability in Herodes's presence; Agrippa II, when ruling part of Galilee, and other areas, but not Judaea, was to maintain a palace in Jerusalem, and came there frequently (Josephus, *Ant.* 20, 189–94). None the less, Acts provides a very clear indication of how this episode came to be added by Luke, and by him alone: for in Acts 4:24–28 the early Christian community is found quoting Psalm 2:1–2: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the magistrates were gathered against the Lord [*Kyrios*] and against his anointed [*Christos*]," and applying this to the double examination of Jesus before Herodes and Pilate. As is notorious, the fact that an episode in the Gospels is explained or justified in terms of a biblical quotation does not necessarily prove that the episode concerned is invented. But the presence of this episode and its re-emphasis in Acts serves at any rate to underline the freedom of Luke's use of whatever material he had before him.

In the Gospel Luke returns to Pilate's dialogue with the high priests and magistrates of the people, whom he summons for a second meeting, and duly refers to Herodes's inability to find Jesus guilty. With that variation, the exchange leads on to another narrative of the dialogue involving the release of Barabbas, brought in without any explanation of the custom or its relation to Passover, and ending with the delivery of Jesus for crucifixion. The taunting of Jesus by the soldiers is omitted, but Luke chooses to explain that Simon the Cyrenaican was "coming from the field" (23:26), a bit of narrative colour which however sits unconvincingly with the idea that this is the first morning of Passover. The action moves to "the place called Kranion"; the inscription on the cross is given almost as in Mark, "the king of the Jews," again with no indication of the language used (23:38).

The scene before Herodes, unique to Luke, remains a puzzle, and its inauthenticity certainly cannot be demonstrated. But the crucial variation is the representation of a formal council meeting in the morning, reinforced by a very concrete later reference to Joseph of Arimathea: "he happened to be a councilor [*bouleutēs*], a good man and just (he did not agree with their counsel or deed)" (23:50). Mark had indeed referred to him as a counsellor (15:43)—though Matthew only as a rich man (27:57)—but had necessarily not deployed any allusion to his non-participation in the relevant deliberations.

All the endlessly debated questions as to whether "the Sanhedrin" had the formal right to pass a sentence of death and, if so, whether it was compelled to have that sentence carried out by the Roman governor can thus be relevant to the Gospels only in relation to Luke's Gospel; for it is only here that something which is clearly a meeting of "the Sanhedrin" is represented as taking place. Luke's narrative might even gain some support from the pro-

vision in Mishnaic tractate Sanhedrin, that that body could only meet as a court in the hours of daylight (4:1). Appeal to the Mishnah will hardly help, however. For the same passage also lays down that a capital trial could not be held on the day preceding a Sabbath or a festival day. Even disregarding the insoluble question of whether the Mishnah preserves any veridical conception of how justice was exercised before the destruction of the Temple, the notion that an arrest, an examination in the house of a high priest, perhaps also a formal meeting of "the Sanhedrin," the production of a prisoner before the Roman *praefectus*, popular demands for execution, and the crucifixion itself could all have taken place on the night of Passover and on the following morning must give rise to serious questions. It is time to turn to John's account.

John

As is well known, the overall structure of John's narrative differs fundamentally from that which is common to the Synoptics, and those details which do reappear in John mainly do so in a quite different narrative context.

It was mentioned before that the preceding narrative of the Last Supper explicitly locates the event before Passover (13:1), and the lengthy account of it is consistent in betraying no trace of its having been a paschal meal (13:1–17:26). This location in time is to be fundamental to the logic of the story, as we shall see. Further differences also appear immediately. For the armed band which Judas leads out to arrest Jesus in the garden beyond the Kedron valley is composed of the *speira* and attendants of (or sent by) the high priests and the Pharisees (18:3). *Speira* is the normal Greek translation of *cohors*, and the impression that this is intended to be understood as a Roman detachment is confirmed by the reference a little later to its commander as the *chiliarchos*, the normal Greek for *tribunus* (cf. the *chiliarchos* of the *speira* of Acts 21:31, who turns out to be the Roman officer Claudius Lysias). No explanation is given by John of this Roman involvement, and indeed no comment is made on it at all. The combined Roman-Jewish group brings Jesus first to (the house of) Annas, a person not mentioned in any other Gospel in this context, but carefully identified here: "he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest of that year" (18:13). John further identifies Caiaphas by saying that it was he who advised the Jews that it was advantageous for one man to die on behalf of the people (18:14), explicitly referring back to 11:47–52, where the advice had been recorded in the context of a council (*synedrion*) of high priests and Pharisees, and Caiaphas had already been identified as "the high priest of that year." If John meant to imply that the high priesthood changed

every year, he was of course wrong. But he was correct in that Caiaphas was indeed high priest from about A.D. 18 to 36. His father-in-law Annas or Ananus (the relationship is attested only here) had, however, also earned the designation high priest by holding the high priesthood from A.D. 6 to 15.[13] The term is thus also applied (by implication) to him when Peter and another disciple follow Jesus into "the house [*aulē*] of the *archiereus*" (18:15), where Peter makes his first denial. A first examination of Jesus is then conducted by the high priest, evidently Annas, leading to no clear answer, after which Annas sends him bound to appear before Caiaphas the high priest (18:19–24). It is here that Peter is again described as warming himself and making his second denial (18:25–27).

No examination in the house of Caiaphas is represented. There is thus a clear contradiction of all three Synoptic narratives, which represent Jesus as being brought to only one high-priestly house, where the examination is conducted; and specifically of Matthew, who names the high priest as Caiaphas. No taking of counsel in the morning is recorded either, and instead "they took Jesus from [the house of] Caiaphas to the *praitōrion*." The time is indicated clearly, and with it both the crucial element in the whole account and a source of considerable difficulty: "it was morning, and they did not enter into the *praitōrion*, so that they might not be defiled, but (be able to) eat the *pascha*" (18:28). The context is thus made quite clear, even if the nature of the defilement which would ensue on entering the *praetorium* of the Roman *praefectus* is not immediately obvious. It is, however, clear, though not explicitly stated, that the group which would otherwise have entered the *praetorium*, coming as representatives directly from the house of the high priest, should be presumed by the reader to have included at least some *kohanim* (priests); this indeed becomes explicit later (19:6). Whether an even more profound significance is to be attached to this precise moment in time depends on how we understand the exchange which then follows between "them" (not identified in any way at this point) and Pilate. He comes out of the *praetorium* to meet them and asks what charge they are bringing. They reply that, if Jesus were not a wrongdoer, they would not have handed him over. Pilate then replies, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your own law." They (here defined simply as the *Iudaioi*) say, "It is not permitted to us to kill anyone." John's authorial comment is that the purpose of this was to ensure the fulfilment of Jesus' own prophecy as to what sort of death he would suffer (18:32). The comment repeats exactly what John had

13. For the family, see now D. Barag and D. Flusser, "The Ossuary of Yehoḥanan Granddaughter of the High Priest Theophilus," *IEJ* 36 (1986): 39.

said at 12:32–33, referring to Jesus' prediction that he would be "raised up" (i.e., on a cross).

Leaving aside for a moment the question of how we should understand the exchange between Pilate and the Jews, it should be stressed that the structure of the narrative which follows depends entirely on the physical separation of Jesus, under arrest in the *praetorium*, and the Jewish group outside. In this narrative Pilate now goes back inside and questions Jesus about his alleged claim to be a king (*basileus*) (18:33–38), and then comes out again to offer the release of Barabbas. John relates the custom to Passover, but puts the explanation of it in the mouth of Pilate addressing the Jews. Barabbas is identified by John simply as a *lēstēs*, a brigand (18:38–40).

The episode of the mocking of Jesus, still in the *praetorium*, follows (19:1–3), after which Pilate comes out again and tells those outside that he can find no cause for accusation in Jesus. Jesus then himself comes out (or is brought out, as must be understood), wearing the mock royal crown and robe. When Pilate displays him to those waiting, they, described as the high priests and the attendants, shout "crucify! crucify!" Pilate then "seeks to release him," by which it seems to be implied, though it is not stated, that he has gone outside to speak to the *Ioudaioi* again. For they then shout, "If you release him you are not a friend of Caesar, for anyone who makes himself a king is an opponent of Caesar."

At this point John's narrative again goes in for deliberate and emphatic detail as regards place and time. This has to be understood as a significant feature of it *as narrative*; no presumption can follow as to whether these details are or are not historically valid. Pilate's response to these shouts is to lead Jesus out again and take his seat on his tribunal (*bēma*) "in the place called Lithostrōtos, but *Hebraïsti* 'Gabbatha' " (here as elsewhere it is not clear whether Hebrew or Aramaic is referred to by *Hebraïsti*). The time is given with equal precision: it was the day of preparation for the *pascha*, and the time was "about the sixth hour." The location is clearly understood to be a paved stone courtyard, out of doors, and immediately outside the *praetorium*; it was in this courtyard that the regular tribunal from which the governor gave jurisdiction and held audience was situated. Matthew also mentions the *bēma*/tribunal (27:19), but does not give its location; and the consistent separation of inside, with consequent impurity, and outside, in the open air, plays no part in the Synoptic narratives. Nor of course does this indication of the date and time.

Once seated on his tribunal, Pilate responds to shouted demands for crucifixion by asking, "Shall I crucify your king?" and the high priests answer, "We have no king but Caesar." John then appears to say that Pilate handed Jesus over to them for crucifixion (19:16), and continues by saying that "they"

took him. But as the narrative unfolds it becomes clear that the execution, and the division of Jesus' clothing (fulfilling Ps. 22:18), is being conducted by Roman soldiers (19:23–24). John's detailed and concrete narrative style is demonstrated to the end, though he makes no reference to Simon the Cyrenaican. Jesus is brought "to the place called (place of) a skull, or, as is said *Hebraïsti*, 'Golgotha' "; he thus reverses the equivalence stated by Mark (15:22). The element which is central to all accounts of the crucifixion, the inscription on the cross, is given here in much more detailed form. First, a longer version of the text itself is offered: "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews" (19:19). John goes on to say that many Jews read the inscription (*titlon*) since it was written *Hebraïsti*, *Rōmaïsti*, *Hellēnisti* (in Hebrew or Aramaic, in Latin, in Greek). The use of the Latin loan-word *titlos* (from *titulus*) is unique to John among the four Gospels. So is the indication of the trilingual character of the inscription. John alone concludes his narrative with an exchange between Pilate and "the high priests of the *Ioudaioi*," who complain that the appellation "king" should have been set out as what Jesus had claimed to have been, and not as the actual truth.

A step-by-step analysis of the structure of John's narrative is essential if we are to avoid the trap of attempting to amalgamate the separate accounts, or of selecting convincing details from each, to make up a historical reconstruction of "what really happened." John's account is in no way compatible with those of the Synoptics. It is not only that there are many different details, or even that the sequence of events unfolds quite differently. It is that the overall setting of these events in relation to the Jewish calendar is different, and significantly different: the Last Supper does not have the character of a paschal meal, and the nature of the exchanges between Pilate and the Jewish leaders is entirely determined by their refusal to enter the *praetorium* in order to avoid pollution, and thus not be prevented from eating the *pascha* later that day.

It has to be admitted that no precise explanation can be offered as to why John should have presumed that entering the *praetorium* would (or might) have entailed defilement. All that we know of the period suggests that, with certain momentary exceptions, the Romans avoided bringing into Jerusalem images which would offend Jewish sensibilities. Nor is there any reason to suppose that appearing before the governor would have involved any hospitality by way of food or drink. The context does, however, clearly suggest the idea either that the location, indoors, itself might impart pollution, or that contact with gentiles, in a relatively confined space indoors, as opposed to the open-air courtyard, might do likewise. None the less, however uncertain we may be as to the precise rules of purity involved, it is not impossible to

find in earlier or contemporary Jewish writing expressions relating to fitness for Passover which might reflect a general awareness of the need for extra caution.[14] So for instance Ezra 6:19–22:

> The children of the captivity kept the Pascha upon the fourteenth (day) of the first month. For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure: and they killed the *pascha* for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord, the God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

The notion of the need for purity as extending to all, not only to priests, is also expressed very clearly in a source directly contemporary with the crucifixion, Philo's *de specialibus legibus* 2:145–46:

> After the New Moon comes the fourth feast called the Crossing-feast, which the Hebrews in their native tongue call Pascha. In this festival many myriads of victims from noon till eventide are offered by the whole people, old and young alike, raised for that particular day to the dignity of priesthood. For at other times the priests according to ordinances of the law carry out both the public sacrifices and those offered by private individuals. But on this occasion the whole nation performs the sacred rites and acts as priest with pure hands and complete immunity. The reason for this is as follows: the festival is a reminder and thank offering for that migration from Egypt . . .

Moreover, as J. A. T. Robinson pointed out,[15] the Mishnah seems to offer a conception of a possible context for the incurring, or non-incurring, of impurity which fits precisely with the presuppositions of John 18. For the tractate *Oholoth* states categorically (18:7) that "the dwelling places of gentiles are unclean." We can reasonably conclude that the notions embodied in John's narrative are at least not provably inapplicable to this period.

However, far more significance than that *may* attach to the much discussed exchange between Pilate and the Jewish leaders, in which he says to them,

14. The quotations are borrowed from Segal (n. 9), 10 and 26.

15. Robinson (n. 3), 228–29.

"Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your own law" to which they reply "It is not permitted to us to execute anyone" (18:32). Their reply has sometimes been read as an allusion to a fixed and universal ban on the carrying out of executions (and capital trials?) by the local Jewish authorities, in view of the equally established reservation of that right to the Roman governor.[16] Indeed it has often been quoted as one of the conclusive items of evidence for the existence of such a rule. If so, however, it must be regarded as reading very strangely. For the narrative must represent the Roman *praefectus* as being unaware of this rule, and as being informed of it by the high-priestly group before him. Such a reading, however strange, is not however impossible, *if* we conceive of the exchange as a feature of John's narrative style, in which necessary explanations are sometimes given by speakers to respondents who in the "real world" might be presumed not to have needed them. An example already referred to, occurs a few lines later, when Pilate says, "You have a custom by which I should release one man to you at Passover" (18:39).

None the less, seeing the exchange as such an authorial device is not the most natural way of reading the passage; and it does have to be emphasised that what we are doing *is* reading a narrative; so how we understand what we read ought to be determined in the first instance by the nature of the information and interpretation which the author has already provided. In that light the most significant guidance and explanation provided by John is given only four lines before: that it was morning, and that they would not enter the *praetorium* because they wanted to avoid pollution and be able to eat the *pascha*. In that light the exchange reads quite naturally. Pilate tells them to *judge* him (he does not here say *execute* him) according to their own law. And they reply that it is not allowed to them to execute anyone. Not allowed by the Romans? Such an interpretation is possible, as we have seen, but very strained. Or not allowed by *Jewish* law? It immediately makes sense, for we are in the morning before Passover and an execution was surely not permitted. We hardly need the Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* 4:1) to tell us, as we have seen, that capital trials could not be conducted on the day before a Sabbath or a festival, because a capital sentence could not be pronounced until the day following the trial. It should be stressed that to emphasise the possibility of reading the text in this way is not at this point to make any assertion about "what actually happened," or about the rules of capital jurisdiction which generally prevailed in the real world of first-century Judaea. It is to suggest a way of understanding what story John is telling—one to whose entire logic,

16. See, e.g., Sherwin-White (n. 2), 32–33.

as we have seen, the approach of Passover is fundamental. John reminds us of this at the moment when Pilate takes his seat on his *tribunal*: "And it was the preparation of the *pascha*, and it was about the sixth hour" (19:14). So he does again immediately after Jesus' death, when the *Ioudaioi*, since it was "preparation," ask that the bodies of Jesus and the two robbers may be taken down so as not to remain on their crosses "on the Sabbath," by which he perhaps means "on the day of a festival" (19:31). If that seems doubtful, we should note that some lines later, when Mary Magdalen comes early in the morning, when it is still dark "on the first (day) of the Sabbath" (20:1), John surely means "on the first of the festival days."[17]

The structure of the narrative and its religious meaning and context are derived from its location on the day of preparation and the approach of Passover. It is surely suggestive that one reader who without hesitation "read" 18:31, "it is not permitted to us," as an allusion to the restrictions imposed by *Jewish* law was Saint Augustine: "But it should be interpreted as meaning that it was because of the sanctity of the festival, which they had already started celebrating, that they said that they were not allowed to execute anyone; because of this they were afraid of becoming polluted by entering the Praetorium."[18]

Conclusions

This discussion has not attempted to present firm conclusions, which are unattainable, but a series of approaches to the question of how we should attempt to understand our evidence on how Jesus came to be crucified. The primary suggestion is that in studying both the course of Jesus' life and the manner of his death, we must not proceed by amalgamating data from all four Gospels. That is illegitimate, because not merely the details, but the entire structure of the story as told by John is different from that in the Synoptics. Our evidence consists of coherent texts, and even where they contain common items, derived either from each other or from a hypothetical common source, or sources, any approach must respect the integrity of these texts as

17. The interpretation of all these expressions seems to me extremely problematic, and I am not convinced that any of them clearly indicate what day of the *week* (as opposed to what day before, or of, Passover) John means to represent. In particular the Anchor Bible translation of 20:1 as "the first day of the week" seems to me quite impossible. For in that case Shabbat, as the *last* day of the week, has disappeared.

18. The quotation comes from Augustine, *In Joh. Ev. Tract.* 114, 4 (*CCL* XXXVI, 641). The same point is made very briefly by John Chrysostom, *In Joh. Homil.* 73, 4 (*PG* LIX, col. 452).

embodying different narrative structures. Any attempt to answer the inescapable question of "what really happened" must therefore involve a choice. No arguments for any particular choice can be conclusive, but without such a choice our selection of elements to prefer must remain merely arbitrary. Given the necessity of choice, this paper offers the suggestion that, both as regards the narrative of Jesus' life and the culminating story of how he met his death, we should give our preference to John.

The expression of such a preference can in itself be no more than a hypothesis. That is to say that our position should be as follows: if, hypothetically, we accept John's Gospel as offering us the best account which we have of the steps which led to the crucifixion, what are the consequences?

Firstly, the arrest, successive examinations, and crucifixion of Jesus took place not on the first day of Passover, but on the day before, from evening to midday. The Last Supper was therefore not a paschal meal at which the paschal lamb was eaten, following the custom by which, by extension, a ceremony originally conducted solely in public in the Temple had become also a domestic ritual. Instead it was merely a meal on the night before. We would thus have to accept that it is the Synoptic accounts which have turned it, not very convincingly, into a paschal meal.[19]

Secondly, we would have to accept the assertion, unique to John, that the arrest of Jesus was carried out by a Roman cohort under a tribune, guided by Judas and assisted by attendants sent by the high priests and Pharisees. If so, that places him closer to the category of the long succession of popular religious leaders, all viewed as instigators of popular disorder, who are known from the pages of Josephus, and all of whom, with their followers, Jewish and Samaritan, were repressed by Roman forces. Jesus must by implication have been viewed as being more like these than like the solitary and apparently unbalanced pseudo-prophet, the other Jesus, arrested by the Jewish magistrates at Tabernacles of A.D. 62 (see above).

Most important of all, however, is the fact that John's narrative, in which Passover has not yet arrived, gives Passover a much more fundamental relevance to what happened—and how—than do the Synoptics, which, while describing these events as occurring on the first night and morning of Passover, ignore the significance which we must presume to have attached to it in real life. For it is indubitable that Passover was the most important of the annual Jewish festivals in this period. Matthew and Mark, it is true, do not claim any more than that the Jewish authorities arrested Jesus on that night, examined him in the house of a high priest, and accused him before

19. So, e.g., Segal (n. 9), 245.

the Roman *praefectus* in the morning, pressing on Pilate the necessity of crucifixion, to which he assented, and which then took place. Even that may seem incredible in view of the requirements of purity imposed during the festival. But Luke goes further, and represents the calling of a regular council in the morning, after the examination in the high-priestly house, and before the accusation before Pilate. If such an event really occurred, it must have offended even more profoundly against the rules later propounded in the Mishnah—and more importantly against the underlying beliefs about the sanctity of the festival which gave rise to those rules.

In John, by contrast, Passover, which has not yet arrived, dominates everything. It is because Jesus is brought before Pilate on the morning of the day whose evening will see the onset of Passover that Jesus' accusers will not enter the *praetorium*. It is, on this interpretation, because the sanctity of the festival prevents the holding of a capital trial even on the day before, that they tell Pilate, "It is not permitted to us to kill anyone." It is because they (unlike Jesus, who has no choice) remain outside the *praetorium*, that Pilate conducts the examination by alternating between questioning Jesus inside and confronting his accusers, and the crowd, outside, in the paved courtyard. This courtyard, identified only by John, has a regular *tribunal* (*bēma*) on which Pilate formally takes his seat when he finally brings Jesus outside to confront the Jewish crowd. Nothing is described here, however, any more than in the other Gospels, which could count as a formal trial by Pilate. There is no formal accusation and defence; no opinions are asked of the governor's council; and no formal verdict is pronounced. As with the other Gospels, in John the decision by Pilate to have Jesus executed is not represented as a verdict concluding a trial, but as a political decision taken as a concession to political pressure both from the Jewish authorities and from the crowd. The long-debated question of whether it was the Roman governor or "the Sanhedrin" which had the legal right to try capital cases in first-century Judaea and to order the execution of those condemned on capital charges may be doubly misconceived, if it is thought to be directly relevant to how we interpret the Gospels. For, firstly, it has already been suggested that we should think rather of the pattern presented by Josephus' account of the execution of James, when the high priest summons "a council [*synedrion*] of judges" (*Ant.* 20, 200); that is to say, when the occasion arose, the high priest called together a group of citizens of his own choosing, just as a Roman official would summon a council (*consilium*).[20] Secondly, of the four Gospels, only

20. For this suggestion, see M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt against Rome* (1987), 113–14.

Luke represents anything that we could think of as a meeting of "the Sanhedrin" and does so in a context (the first day of Passover) which is highly improbable. For the rest, what we see is an examination in the house of a high priest; or rather, in John's case, of the two successive high priests, whose current roles are carefully (and correctly) specified; again the distinction between the high priest currently in office (Caiaphas) and an ex-holder with the rank of high priest is unique to him. Since no Gospel represents Pilate's decision as a formal verdict, there is a very clear sense in which the entire notion of "the trial of Jesus" is a modern construct.

If instead it was a political decision, then it is again John who gives the clearest conception of its motivation. As Martin Goodman points out, Annas/Ananus was the first high priest to be appointed by a Roman *praefectus* after the provincialisation of Judaea in A.D. 6, and he and Caiaphas between them occupied the position for all but about three of the first twenty years of the provincial period. They cannot but be seen as having collaborated successfully with the occupying power. That Caiaphas actually expressed the view that it was worth sacrificing one man to prevent Roman retribution on the whole people (Jn. 11:50) cannot of course be known. But the thought would have corresponded well enough to the logic of the political situation. Moreover, *either* we know nothing whatsoever about the crucifixion *or* we can at least accept the one detail on which all four Gospels agree, that on the cross Jesus was described as "King of the Jews." Only John adds the detail that this inscription was called by the borrowed Latin term *titlos* (*titulus*), and that it was written in three languages. More important, it is he who represents Pilate's final dialogue with the crowd as turning on just this point: "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar; for anyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar," "Behold your king!" "Take him and crucify him," "Shall I crucify your king?" "We have no king but Caesar." Philo's *Against Flaccus* happens to provide a precisely contemporary analysis of the susceptibility to such pressure of a Roman governor who feels himself to be out of favour with the emperor (*Flacc.* 3–4/8–23).

It was still the day of preparation for Passover (*paraskeuē*), about the sixth hour; there was still time for the crucifixion to take place, and for the bodies of Jesus and the two robbers to be taken down before the festival proper began (19:31), though the tomb where the body was laid had to be close because of the "preparation of the Jews." By the next morning it was already of course the first day of the festival, or, as John puts it, "the first day of the Sabbath" (19:42–20:1). It is the approach of Passover which dictates every aspect of how the story unfolds, just as, in John's narrative, Jesus' life as a Galilean holy man is structured by the need to go up repeatedly to Jerusalem to the

annual cycle of festivals. This necessity should, I suggest, be seen as of crucial importance. It is remarkable that, even in recent years, it has seemed possible to discuss the "Palestinian Judaism" of this time as a purely personal religion, without giving a central (or indeed any) place to the communal worship and sacrifice at the Temple.[21] But John's narrative may precisely reveal the centrality of this communal sacrificial cult in the life of Jesus. If his portrayal gives us a Jesus who is less far from "the historical Jesus" than the one whom the Synoptics represent, then we can at least perceive that their attachment to these festivals was one thing which Jesus and his accusers shared. It was not Roman law but their own which made them say, at that moment, "It is not allowed to us to execute anyone."

21. So E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977), part I: "Palestinian Judaism."

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Roman Coloniae *of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations*[*]

Introduction

"The history of Roman colonisation is the history of the Roman state": so Ernst Kornemann, in his standard article on Roman *coloniae*.[1] The following survey of the *coloniae* which the emperors created between the late first century B.C. and the middle of the third century A.D. in the Fertile Crescent—or, on a different definition, in those provinces of the Roman Empire where both Greek and various Semitic languages were spoken—cannot of course contribute directly to an understanding of the earlier phases of that history. But it does very vividly reflect the rapid progression in the nature of the "colonising" process itself, from the one unquestionable military *colonia* of the Augustan period, Berytus, with its wide territory extending over the Mount Lebanon chain into the Bekaa valley, to the three *coloniae* of the first and second centuries A.D., all in or on the borders of Judaea, to a wholly new phase in the Severan period and the following decades, when the title *colonia* was granted to towns all over the region, including the new province of Mesopotamia, and thus came into use almost as far east as the Tigris.

[*]First published in H. Solin and M. Kajava, eds., *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History* (Helsinki, 1990), 7–58.

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1. F. Kornemann, *RE* IV (1901), s.v. "coloniae," cols. 511–88, in col. 560; "Die Geschichte der römischen Kolonisation ist die Geschichte des römischen Staates."

But the process of colonisation, or of the conferment of the title *colonia*, was also one of many forms of intervention by Rome in the social structures and communal identities of a region long since Hellenised, but where a variety of other ethnic identities, most of them extremely difficult for us to characterise without distortion, were still very important factors.[2] Roman colonisation naturally introduced a new element into this already complex scene, and in this sense it can be perceived from a quite different angle, not as part of the history of Rome but as an element in the cultural history of the Fertile Crescent. Of all the Roman *coloniae* of this region, only one, Berytus, with its hinterland which was later separated off as the *colonia* of Heliopolis,[3] represented a substantial island of Romanisation, of Latin language and culture, and of Roman law, which was to last into the late Empire. But this *colonia* too was established in the context of an already-existing Greek, or Graeco-Phoenician, city, and inevitably took on many of the roles and forms of public life associated with a Greek city. The same was *a fortiori* true of the others, all of which, with one exception, show a profound continuity with the Greek cities which preceded them. The exception is Aelia Capitolina, founded by Hadrian on the ruins of Jerusalem, destroyed as a Jewish city in the great revolt of A.D. 66, and now recreated as a pagan city after the Bar Kochba war of A.D. 132–35. But even Aelia, like the other *coloniae* of this region, and unlike almost all those of Italy, Africa, and Europe, continued to mint coins until the mid-third century.[4] For minting was a normal, if not universal, characteristic of cities in this region, and nearly every *colonia*, real or titular, acted likewise. The rank of *colonia* was to become, among other things, simply another status, like that of *metropolis*, to which a city might aspire. In contemporary literature or documents, depending on the context, the title *colonia* might deserve mention, or might not. The latter, for instance, was the case when a boxer put up an inscription at Aphrodisias in Caria in about A.D. 165 to record his world-wide victories. When he lists the places in the Syrian region where his victories had been won, his words represent a wholly Greek world, in which Roman colonisation is invisible, just as is

2. For a sketch of some of the issues, see F. Millar, "Empire, Community and Culture in the Roman Near East: Greeks, Syrians, Jews and Arabs," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 38 (1987): 143; see also F. Millar, *The Roman Near East* (1993).

3. This formulation presupposes the validity of a particular view of the earlier history and status of Heliopolis, discussed more fully below.

4. The *coloniae* of Spain, Africa, and Gaul ceased to mint, as did other towns in these regions, in the Julio-Claudian period. The one remarkable exception to the rule that *coloniae* in the Latin-speaking provinces did not mint after the mid-first century is provided by Viminacium, which minted between the reigns of Gordian and Gallienus.

the non-Greek element: "at Damascus, the men's *pancration* [all-in wrestling] twice, at Berytus the men's *pancration*, at Tyre the men's *pancration*, at Caesarea Stratonos the men's *pancration*, at Neapolis of Samaria the men's *pancration*, at Scythopolis the men's *pancration*, at Gaza the men's *pancration*, at Caesarea Panias the men's *pancration* twice, at Hieropolis the men's *pancration*. . . ."[5] Berytus and Caesarea were already *coloniae* (and, as it happens, Damascus, Tyre, Neapolis, and Gaza were later to gain the same status).

That was not, however, the whole story. The impact of Roman rule was reflected, among other things, by the entry not only into Greek but into Semitic languages of a long list of Latin terms, among them *colonia* and its cognates.[6] Some of these will be considered further below, above all in connection with Palmyra and Edessa. But it may be instructive to mention here, as an example of the complex cultural context into which these Roman *coloniae*, or nominal *coloniae*, were inserted, two inscriptions, one from Apamea and one from Palmyra. In Apamea, in the reign of Hadrian, we find the peculiar institutions of the *colonia* of Berytus reflected in an inscription honouring an actor: among other distinctions he was *ἐν κολωνείᾳ Βηρύτῳ τετειμημένον σεξβερὰτι* (*AE* 1976, 686). The term is not other-wise attested in Greek transliteration, and the form in which it is given is presumably intended to represent the Latin ablative *sexviratu*. Then, from a century later, there is a Palmyrene bust of the first half of the third century, now in the Louvre, which represents a man with a Greek-Latin name, who is a citizen not of Palmyra itself but of the *colonia* of Berytus.[7] The subject is identified in a

5. L. Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche* (1953), no. 72.

6. For Greek, see H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexicon and Analysis* (1974), 62 and 108–10. For Semitic inscriptions, see M. G. Angeli Bertinelli, *Nomenclatura pubblica e sacra di Roma nelle epigrafi semitiche* (1970), 108 (*colonia*, *colonus*); 117–18 (*duumvir*, *duumviratus*). In the latter case the relevant transliterated forms are all borrowed from the Greek equivalents. See, for comparative material, S. Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targumim* (1898–99), and A. Schall, *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen* (1960). For QLNY', see M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim* (repr. 1950), 1379. For linguistic interplay, note also M. G. Angeli Bertinelli, "I Semiti e Roma: appunti di una lettura di fonti semitiche," *Serta Historica Antiqua* I (1986), 145. Martin Goodman drew my attention to further uses of *colonia* as a loan-word in the Babylonian Talmud: *Sukkah* 45a; *Yebamoth* 115b; *Baba Bathra* 4a. QLNY' unfortunately does not find a place in D. Sperber, *A Dictionary of Latin and Greek Legal Terms in Rabbinic Literature* (1984).

7. C. Clermont-Ganneau, *Répertoire d'épigraphie semitique* II, no. 1054 = *CIS* II 4401; (Greek) *IGR* III 1035 = *OGIS* 588. See M. A. R. Colledge, *The Art of Palmyra* (1970), 225 and pl. 144.

bilingual inscription, in Greek on the left and Palmyrene on the right, as follows:

Μᾶρκος Ἰούλιος / Μάξιμος / Ἀριστείδης, / κόλων / Βηρύτιος, / πατὴρ Λου/κίλλης γυ/ναικὸς Περ/τίνακος

MRQWS YWLYWS MKSMWS / 'RSṬYDS QWLWN / BRTY' 'B(W)H DY / LWQL' 'TT PRṬNKS

The Latin word *colonus* has thus become a pseudo-Greek word, *κόλων*, and from there has been transliterated into Palmyrene as an intelligible form of identification of a person from the *colonia* of Berytus. Similar transliterated forms were already in use for the institutions of Palmyra itself, or very soon would be, as we will see (text to nn. 158–66). But, as we will also see, allusions to cities as *coloniae* and to their inhabitants as preserving the relevant status are very rare after the third century; it remains unclear whether this is because such statuses had genuinely ceased to be relevant; or because the city coinages of the Greek East had ceased in the second half of the third century,[8] or because the "epigraphic habit," though it had not ceased, had greatly declined. Moreover, Palmyrene, a language which is known only through inscriptions, and whose vocabulary is exceptionally rich in loan-words, ceased to be inscribed soon after the reconquest by Aurelian.[9]

It is therefore all the more striking that even in the late fifth century, in a period when to all appearances the status of *colonia* had long ceased to be of any importance, we still find preserved in the Babylonian Talmud a reflection of the possibility which had existed in the early Empire, of asking the emperor to grant the rank of *colonia* to a city. For the treatise *Avodah Zara* (on pagan worship) contains a tale of an emperor called "Antoninus" (conceivably Caracalla) saying to "Rabbi" that he wishes "to make Tiberias a *colonia*"—TT'BYD ṬBRY' QLNY'.[10] This elevation, so far as we know, did not in fact

8. See the useful presentation of these coinages, and their disappearance, by K. Harl, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics in the Roman East, A.D. 180–275* (1987).

9. For this point, see Millar (n. 2), 156. Note, however, the two Palmyrene inscriptions published and discussed by M. Gawlikowski, *Syria* 48 (1971): 412–13, and *Le temple palmyrénien* (1973), 76, nos. 10–11, of which one dates to 272, while its companion (of 273?) seems to refer to Aurelian—['W]RLYNWS QSR. Note also the pair of Greek and Palmyrene inscriptions of A.D. 279/80, M. Gawlikowski, *Ann. Arch. Ar. Syr.* 36–37 (1986–87): 167, no. 8.

10. *Bab. Talmud*, *Avodah Zara*, 10a. Note that in *Tiberias: From the Foundation to the Moslem Conquest* (1988), 96–97 (Hebrew), Y. Meshorer claims to read COL on coins of the city under Elagabal. I owe this reference to Alla Stein.

occur, and the story may very likely be legend. But the Severan period was exactly that in which a whole series of places not far away—Heliopolis, Tyre, Sebaste, Emesa, Sidon, Petra, Bostra, followed in the midcentury by Neapolis and Philippopolis—did gain this status. It had been something to which a middle-rank town like Tiberias could then reasonably have aspired.

That aspiration, whether a historical reality in itself or not, reflects the third, final, and most complex stage of Roman "colonisation" in the Near East. The three stages can be regarded as quite distinct: firstly, the settlement of a veteran *colonia* at Berytus under Augustus; secondly, the three *coloniae* of, or on the borders of, Judaea, namely Ptolemais, Caesarea, and Aelia Capitolina, founded between the mid-first and mid-second century A.D.; and, thirdly, the widespread grants of the status of *colonia* in the Severan period and the mid-third century, extending far into the newly conquered territory of Mesopotamia. The successive phases will be discussed in order here; given the importance and novelty of the nature of "colonisation" under Severus, that period will be discussed separately from the remaining period up to the mid-third century.

Berytus and Its *territorium*; Heliopolis

Alone of all the *coloniae* to be considered here, Berytus belongs in the only major phase of organized veteran settlement outside Italy in Roman history, the age of Caesar and Augustus.[11] Before that period organised colonial settlement outside Italy was almost unknown: the *colonia* of Narbo in southern Gaul (118 B.C.) was indeed the only example of a pre-Caesarian provincial colony which was successfully established and survived as a formal entity. After the reign of Augustus, actual *coloniae*, involving the establishment of settlers and the formation of a new city constitution, can be found; but they are not common, and it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish such a settlement from the mere conferment of the title *colonia* on an existing city, with some or all of the associated rights. An extra complication is added to the question by the fact that one of our best and most used items of evidence on the formal and legal character of *coloniae* comes not only from the main

11. Among more recent works on this major topic, note F. Vittinghoff, *Römische Kolonisation und Bürgerrechtspolitik unter Caesar und Augustus* (1952); B. M. Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor* (1967); P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (1971), chap. 15 and app. 15; L. J. F. Keppie, *Colonisation and Veteran Settlement in Italy, 47–14 B.C.* (1983); J. C. Mann, *Roman Colonisation and Veteran Settlement during the Principate* (1983).

period of the creation of nominal *coloniae*, but from a citizen of one of them, Domitius Ulpianus from Tyre (text to n. 131 and following it).

Berytus, however, represents a quite different case.[12] Strabo's contemporary account of its settlement, though not entirely clear as to the precise extent of its *territorium*, provides all the essentials: "But though Berytus was razed to the ground by Tryphon, it has now been restored by the Romans; and it received two legions, which were settled there by Agrippa, who also added to it much of the territory of Marsyas as far as the Orontes river."[13] Of the history of Berytus as a Hellenised Phoenician city in the late Hellenistic and then Roman republican periods very little can be known; but Strabo records, just before the passage quoted above, that robbers established on Mount Lebanon had been able to ravage both Berytus and Byblos (16, 2, 18 [755]); and the coinage of Berytus indicates that the city had been included in Antonius' grant of the coast of Phoenicia to Cleopatra, made perhaps in 37/6 B.C.[14] The evidence is sufficient to make clear that Berytus will have shared in the generally disturbed history of the region in the mid-first century B.C.,[15] without providing any conclusive reason why the one Roman *colonia* should have been placed there rather than anywhere else. But Strabo's words suggest a military purpose, in relation to the unsubdued mountain zone behind; or rather two mountain zones, the chain of Mount Lebanon and to the east that of Anti-Lebanon, with the Marsyas, or Bekaa valley, and the sources of the Orontes, in between.

Jerome's Chronicle offers a firm date for the foundation of the *colonia*, as of the *colonia* of Patras, 15 B.C.[16] Since Strabo (above) attributes the foundation to Agrippa, and this was a period when he was present in the Syrian region, the dating can be accepted. It is not impossible, however, in the case of Patras

12. For the history of the city, see R. Mouterde and J. Lauffray, *Beyrouth ville romaine: histoire et monuments* (1952); R. Mouterde, "Regards sur Beyrouth phénicienne, hellénistique et romaine," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 40 (1964): 145; N. Jidejian, *Beirut through the Ages* (1973); J. Lauffray, "Beyrouth Archéologie et Histoire, époques gréco-romaines I. Période hellénistique et Haut-Empire romain," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 135. For Berytus as a *colonia*, see B. Isaac, *The Limits of Empire: The Roman Army in the East* (1990), 318–21, a study to which this paper owes much.

13. *Geog.* 16, 2, 19 (756), Loeb trans.

14. For the details, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I (1973), 287–89.

15. For an excellent survey of the history of the region, to which what follows owes much, see J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Syrie romaine, de Pompée à Dioclétien," *JRS* 68 (1978): 44.

16. R. Helm, *Die Chronik des Hieronymus* (1956), 166: *Coloniae Berytum (sic) et Patras deductae. Bosforum Agrippa capit.*

that a settlement of legionaries after Actium was followed only later by the formal creation of a new *colonia*, which incorporated a substantial number of inhabitants of the surrounding region.[17] If that sequence is valid, which is not wholly certain, the same may perhaps have applied to Berytus. But if some slight uncertainty prevails as to the date, the essential fact that this was a genuine veteran *colonia* is secure. It is consonant with that fact that both its foundation by the favour of Augustus continued to be recalled, and that Berytus was regarded as possessing what was later at least described as the *ius Italicum*. So Ulpian writes in the first book of his *de censibus*: *Sed et Berytensis colonia in eadem provincia* (Syria Phoenice, as it had become in Ulpian's time), *Augusti beneficiis gratiosa, et (ut divus Hadrianus in quadam oratione ait) Augustana colonia, quae ius Italicum habet* (*Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 1). Ulpian's quite flowery Latin is not free from obscurity; but in the context he clearly means (at least) that the new *colonia* paid no *tributum*.

Effectively nothing is known of the urban character of late Hellenistic Berytus, and we do not know whether or not a fundamental restructuring of the urban plan will have taken place in the case of a *colonia* established on the site of an existing city. The ancient rituals for the foundation of a *colonia* are indeed represented, along with the *signa* of the legions V Macedonica and VIII Augusta, on coins issued by Berytus from the reign of Augustus onwards.[18] But coins representing a founder ploughing with an ox and a cow, while they may be records of an actual historical event, the marking out of a new boundary for Berytus in 15 B.C., cannot be assumed to be so. Their significance may be purely symbolic. But, while we also do not have any evidence for an urban restructuring of Berytus to compare with Josephus' account of Herod's re-foundation of Stratōnos Pyrgos as the new city of Caesarea,[19] we do know that Herod's munificence in providing public buildings for cities in the Syrian region embraced Berytus also: "Thus he provided gymnasia for Tripolis, Damascus and Ptolemais, a wall for Byblos,

17. See J.-M. Roddaz, "Marcus Agrippa," *BEFAR* 253 (1984): 431–33, depending, however, on a combination of Strabo 8, 7, 5 (387), referring to a settlement of legionaries subsequent to Actium, and Pausanias 7, 18, 7, describing the establishment of a new *colonia* with a civilian population from the surrounding region. No certain chronological sequence can be deduced. For arguments for an early date for the settlement of at least some veterans in each place, see J. G. P. Best, "Colonia Iulia Equestris and Legio Decima Equestris," *Talanta* 3 (1971): 1.

18. G. F. Hill, *BMC Phoenicia* (1910), lv. f., e.g., no. 51 and pl. VIII.10. See R. Mouterde, *MUSJ* 40 (1964): 145, on 164–65.

19. Josephus, *BJ* 1, 408–16; *Ant*. 15, 331–41. On Caesarea, see below.

halls (exedras), porticoes, temples and market-places (agoras) for Berytus and Tyre, theatres for Sidon and Damascus, an aqueduct for Laodicea on the sea, baths, sumptuous fountains and colonnades, admirable alike for their architecture and their proportions, for Ascalon."[20] It is interesting that Josephus, although of course aware that Berytus was a Roman *colonia*,[21] does not see Herod's contribution to public building there as different in kind from that which he made in the case of Greek cities.

The evidence does not in fact allow us to say more than that Berytus, in the imperial period, acquired the normal apparatus of public buildings, adorned with Corinthian columns, which characterised the more important provincial cities. The fragmentary archaeological and architectural traces recovered from beneath the modern city confirm this, without proving that the city was distinctively Roman in appearance, or different from the surrounding Greek cities.[22]

The munificence of Herod was followed by that of his grandson Agrippa I. But here perhaps we can see reflected the particular status and particular cultural character of the place. For Agrippa, as well as building a theatre, provided an amphitheatre, something not unknown, but certainly not typical, in Greek cities,[23] and then laid on there gladiatorial shows involving 1,400 condemned criminals.[24] The gladiatorial show was one of the most distinctive Roman importations into the communal life of the Greek East, and this report represents one of the earliest items of evidence for its intrusion there;[25] it is perhaps not an accident that the shows took place, in a newly built amphitheatre, in a Roman *colonia*.

We cannot be equally sure that there was anything distinctively Roman about the benefactions of Agrippa's son, Agrippa II, in the reign of Nero. He too is recorded as having built a theatre (a new one, or rebuilding the existing one?), and having put on lavish shows; but he also distributed both grain and oil, the latter surely more characteristic of popular expectations in a Greek city. Beyond that he adorned the city with statues and "*eikones*

20. Josephus, *BJ* 1, 422. Loeb trans. Not repeated in *Ant*.

21. *BJ* 7, 39: ἡ δ' ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Φοινίκῃ πόλις Ῥωμαίων ἄποικος.

22. For the literary and archaeological evidence for Roman Berytus, see, above all, Mouterde and Lauffray (n. 12).

23. See, e.g., F. Millar, "Introduction: The Greek World and Rome," in S. Macready and F. H. Thompson, *Roman Architecture in the Greek East* (1987). Hazel Dodge, however, pointed out to me that recent discoveries had revealed more amphitheatres than previously known.

24. Josephus, *Ant*. 19, 335–37.

25. See L. Robert, *Les gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec* (1940; repr. 1971), 31–32.

which were copies of ancient ones."[26] It is far from clear what this means. Were they copies of classical Greek sculptures (like the statue of Augustus in his temple at Caesarea, modelled on Pheidias' Zeus at Olympia, and the *Rōmē* modelled on the Hera from Argos)?[27] Or something like the bronze statues of figures from Greek mythology, installed in the early second century at the new baths in Apamea on the Orontes?[28] Or were these images ones which more specifically recalled the Roman character and origins of the city?

The latter is not impossible. For, while there is every reason to presume that the new *colonia* incorporated the existing inhabitants of Berytus and its hinterland as far as Anti-Lebanon, and while it is generally characteristic of those Roman *coloniae* in the Greek East whose epigraphy has been studied that the use of the Greek language steadily reasserted itself,[29] it is very distinctive of Berytus that its Roman and Latin character was heavily emphasised from the beginning and remained clearly visible at least until the fourth century. The city's public use of Latin is for instance still embodied in an inscription of A.D. 344, from the base of a statue at Berytus representing Flavius Domitius Leontius, praetorian prefect and *consul ordinarius*: *ordo Berytiorum statuam sumptibus suis ex aere locatam civili habitu dedicavit*.[30] Without unnecessarily multiplying examples, the public use of Latin there can easily be traced back through the Tetrarchic (*CIL* III 14165[7]) and Severan[31] periods to the second century. It was then, as it seems, that for instance M. Sentius Proculus was a decurion and *duumvir*, and subsequently embarked on an equestrian career before entering the Senate, and being honoured as *patronus coloniae* with at least two statues, as their bases, inscribed in Latin, attest.[32] From the second half of the first century a Latin inscription records the restoration by Agrippa II and Berenice of a building whose name is lost *[q]uod rex Herodes, proavos eorum fecerat*, adorned with marble and columns (*AE* 1928, 82).

Yet another Latin inscription comes from an altar dedicated to the Fortuna of the Genius of the Colonia by M. Iulius Avidius from Emesa, who

26. Josephus, *Ant.* 20, 211–12: *καὶ τὴν πᾶσαν δὲ πόλιν ἀνδριάντων ἀναθέσεσιν καὶ ταῖς τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀποτύποις εἰκόσιν ἐκόσμει.*

27. Josephus, *BJ* 1, 414.

28. *AE* 1976, 678.

29. For the *coloniae* in Pisidia, see Levick (n. 11), chaps. 11–12; for Corinth, see *Corinth* VIII.3: *The Inscriptions, 1926–1950* (1966), 18–19.

30. *ILS* 1234.

31. See, e.g., *Bull. Mus. Beyrouth* 7 (1944–45): 60, no. 2 = *AE* 1950, 230, a dedication to Iulia Domna.

32. See R. Cagnat, "M. Sentius Proculus de Beyrouth," *Syria* 7 (1926): 67; *AE* 1926, 150; H. Devijver, *Pros. milit. Equestr.* II, S. 25.

was honoured with a *corona* by the *decuriones*, apparently at the moment of the centenary of the foundation of the *colonia—saeculo c(ondita) c(olonia)*—so (see above) in the 80s A.D. (*AE* 1950, 233). If that is so, it had been not long before that, in the reign of Vespasian, that someone, perhaps the Emperor himself, had erected or restored *tabernae*, perhaps fronting the forum, and had put up a statue of Liber Pater, *[s]ignum Liberi Patris*.[33] Given the association, or confusion, of the two, it may well be that this statue is the same as that of Liber Pater's servant Marsyas, which coins of Berytus from the reign of Elagabal represent as standing in front of an arched entrance which may be an entrance of the forum. If so, and of course that remains a speculation, it might have been a deliberate reminiscence of the statue of Marsyas which stood on the edge of the *comitium* in Rome.[34] Marsyas also appears on some of the earlier coins of the *colonia*. Here as elsewhere, however, the question of what exactly that signified remains open to debate. There is no concrete evidence whatsoever for the common notion that Marsyas specifically denoted the possession of *ius Italicum*. Servius (*ad Aen*. 4, 58; cf. 3, 20) believed rather that a statue of Marsyas placed in the forum of a city had indicated that it enjoyed *libertas*. Veyne argued that Marsyas on city coinages showed no more than a claim to association with Rome; but a clear correlation with colonial status is indeed evident. Beyond that, nothing is certain.[35]

Given the relatively restricted corpus of inscriptions from Berytus, never collected and hardly likely to be in the foreseeable future, the attestation there of the cults of Roman deities in private dedications (though not on the city coins) is extraordinarily full: Venus Domina and Mercurius Dominus;[36] Venus, Mercurius, Apollo, Diana, Mars, Ceres(?), Proserpina in a single dedication, along with the Fortuna of the Colonia and the Fata;[37] and above all the ancient and little-known deity, Mater Matuta, whose temple stood on

33. *CIL* IV 160, subsequently re-published; see R. Mouterde, "Monuments et inscriptions de Syrie et du Liban 1. L'emplacement du Forum de Béryte," *MUSJ* 25 (1942–43): 23, whence the following identifications are derived.

34. See M. Torelli, *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs* (1982), 102; F. Coarelli, *Il Foro romano* II: *Periodo repubblicano e augusteo* (1985), 36–37.

35. For Marsyas on coins of Berytus, see *BMC Phoenicia*, 56–57. See P. Veyne, "Le Marsyas 'colonial' et l'indépendence des cités," *Rev. Phil.* 35 (1961): 87. Cf. F. W. Klimowsky, "The Origin and Meaning of Marsyas in the Greek Imperial Coinage," *Isr. Num. Journ*. 6–7 (1982–83): 88; and for a reassertion of an original connection with colonial foundations, Torelli (n. 34), 91–92. For *ius Italicum*, note also M. Malavolta s.v. in *Diz. Epig*. IV, fasc. 73–74 (1985), 2333–39.

36. *Syria* 5 (1924): 109, nos. 3–4 = *AE* 1924, 137–38.

37. *Syria* 20 (1939): 315 = *AE* 1940, 171.

the Forum Boarium in Rome.[38] The inscription naming this goddess (*CIL* III 6680) comes from a place called Der el-Kala in the hills behind Berytus where there was a temple of Zeus Baalmarcod, of which more in a moment.[39] The Latin inscription records that an altar was dedicated to Mater Matuta by a lady named Flavia Nicolais *(quae et?) Saddane*, *ex responso Deae Iunonis*. How a Graeco-Syrian woman, evidently a new citizen, came to subscribe to the cult of Mater Matuta we can only guess. But for the name of such a deity to have been familiar at all implies a profound "Roman" consciousness among at least some of the population. The inscriptions of Berytus and its hinterland are sufficient at least to raise the question (which is a pure speculation) as to whether the *eikones* imitating ancient models which Agrippa II installed might have been intended as a compliment to the *colonia*, and have been borrowed from Rome rather than classical Greece.

The inscriptions also serve to put into an intelligible context the early experience of the famous Latin grammarian Valerius Probus, from Berytus: "In the province he had read with a *grammatistes* certain ancient *libelli*, for the memory of the *antiqui* still survived there, and had not yet been erased as it had in Rome." The period concerned is the first half of the first century A.D.; it remains equally noteworthy that Probus turned finally to his grammatical studies only after long seeking a centurionate and giving up in despair.[40] Had he been successful, he would have been another in the series of centurions and *primipili*, with the tribe Fabia, from Berytus/Heliopolis, as well as common soldiers, attested on Latin inscriptions both locally and abroad.[41]

It was this very distinctive character of Berytus as a place of Roman culture which was to give it its slowly developing role as the site of a major school of Roman law. To put it in those terms, however, is to go beyond what our evidence for the period up to the fourth century actually says. Nothing at all indeed attests this role until we come to the address of thanks which Gregorius, the later bishop and "wonder-worker" (*Thaumatourgos*), from Neocaesarea in Pontus, addressed to his teacher Origen, probably in the 230s. In

38. See F. Coarelli, *Il Foro Boario dalle origini alla fine della Repubblica* (1988), chap. 3.

39. For the site and the temple, see D. Krencker and W. Zschietzschmann, *Römische Tempel in Syrien* I (1938), 1–3, with vol. II, 11.7 (map) and 2.

40. Suetonius, *de gram.* 24.

41. From Heliopolis and its vicinity, e.g., *IGLS* VI 2781 (L. Antonius Naso, career beginning with centurionate); *IGLS* VI 2786/7 (L. Gerellanus Fronto, *primuspilus*); *IGLS* VI 2796 (C. Velius Rufus). Common soldiers: *ILS* 2483 (Coptos); *AE* 1929, 20; 1934, 267 (both Carnuntum); 1940, 84 (Rome). Another is attested in the military documents from Masada, published by H. M. Cotton and J. Geiger, *Masada* II: *The Latin and Greek Documents* (1989), no. 722, to whose commentary I owe these references.

it he explains that the ambition which had first led him to the Syrian region had been a desire to pursue the study of Roman law, and for that he and his brother had set out for Berytus, "a city somewhat more Roman, and considered a place of instruction in those laws."[42] The reference is not to a "school," but to Berytus itself as a place of Roman culture, including legal culture. By the end of the century we find Diocletian and Maximian replying to students from the province of Arabia who are engaged on *liberalia studia*, and especially the *professio iuris*, and hence are living *in civitate Berytensium provinciae Phoenices*, to say that they may have exemption from *munera* until age twenty-four (*CJ* 10, 50, 1). The view that students from the Greek East could find in Berytus a "Roman" or Latin culture of which legal studies were a prominent part is strikingly confirmed by the verse epitaph from the fourth century of a young man from Colybrassus in Cilicia: "When I journeyed from here to the distinguished city of Berytus for the sake of the Roman Muse and the laws . . ."[43]

We need not pursue the story further, or repeat the well-known allusions by Libanius to the attraction of students of Roman law to Berytus.[44] Enough has been said to show that Roman culture was a very distinctive feature of the city into the fourth century. That is not to say, however, that Berytus was ever a zone of purely Roman culture. Franz Cumont's description of Berytus, Heliopolis, and Ptolemais as "Latin islands in the Semitic ocean"[45] was indeed both overstated and misleading in a variety of different ways. For at start there is no reason to suppose that the Greek-speaking population of Augustan Berytus was not incorporated in the *colonia*. As a symbol (if no more) of that continuity, Poseidon, the chief deity of Hellenistic Berytus, reappears in the second and third centuries on the coins of the *colonia*.[46] It is also interesting that the Greek writer Hermippus, an antiquarian from Berytus of the early second century, who wrote among other things a work "On Slaves Who Distinguished Themselves in Paideia," is described by the Suda as originating "from an inland village."[47] For the possession of an extensive hinterland embracing parts of two mountain ranges and the Bekaa valley is an important

42. H. Crouzel, *Grégoire le Thaumaturge remerciement à Origène* (Sources Chrétiennes 148, 1969), 5/62: ἡ τῶν Βηρυτίων πόλις ἡ δὲ οὐ μακρὰν ἀπέχουσα τῶν ἐνταῦθα [Syria Palaestina] πόλις Ῥωμαϊκωτέρα πως, καὶ τῶν νόμων τούτων εἶναι πιστευθεῖσα παιδευτήριον.

43. *SEG* XXVI, 1456, with references to the literature.

44. For the later history, see P. Collinet, *Histoire de l'école de droit de Béryte* (1925).

45. *CAH* XI[1] (1936), 626, quoted by Vittinghoff (n. 11), 134.

46. *BMC Phoenicia*, lxvi–ixi. A dolphin-and-trident type had, however, appeared under Augustus (no. 47).

47. Suda, ed. Adler II, 414, s.v. Ἕρμιππος, Βηρύτιος, ἀπὸ κώμης μεσογαίου.

feature of what colonial Berytus was. But in fact such a Greek writer might easily have come from the city itself. As we would expect, though the coins of the *colonia* remain (unlike those of some later nominal *coloniae*; see below) firmly Latin, as do inscriptions recording votes of the *decuriones*, private inscriptions from there may be in Greek as well as Latin. The "sea" in which Berytus was an island cannot be described in any simple way as "Semitic." If "Semitic" is supposed to have some wider cultural or racial connotation, the criteria for its use are obscure, and its employment is potentially misleading. If it has a linguistic sense, which makes it at least susceptible to definition, then it should be conceded that there is not a single Semitic language inscription from the city or its territory in the colonial period, except for one stray Palmyrene one from Harbata in the Bekaa.

That is not to say that there were no non-Graeco-Roman elements to be found in the culture of the region, or no Semitic-language terms embedded in Greek or Latin. A clear example, which is also of considerable importance for understanding Heliopolis (see further below), is presented by the sanctuary of *Theos Baalmarcod* at Der el-Kala, mentioned above. The meaning of the Semitic name of the god is conveniently supplied by a Greek dedication of the Roman period, where he is addressed as "Lord of dances,"[48] corresponding clearly to B'L MRQD. We need not doubt that this is a local cult, taken over and observed by the new population of the colonial period. There is nothing to show how long the cult had already been established there; all that is clear is that the name of the deity is Semitic, and that dedications, in both Greek and Latin were made there under the Empire.[49] Similar dedications might be made to Baalmarcod in Berytus itself, and the wording of one of them is of particular interest: *I.O.M. Balmarcodi M. Verginius Bassus (centurio) leg. IIII Scyt. vot. sol*.[50] The appellation *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Balmarcod* is repeated elsewhere as *I.O.M.B.*[51]

When the Latin-speaking inhabitants came to characterise the god worshipped at the temple at Der el-Kala, they sometimes, it is clear, applied to him grandiose appellations normally used for Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, with his archaic temple on the Capitol in Rome. That in its turn must raise a much wider question. For the same appellations were also used by them,

48. Le Bas-Waddington, no. 1855 = *CIG* III 4536 = *IGR* III 1078: *κοίρανε κώμων*.

49. See, e.g., Le Bas-Waddington, no. 1856 = *CIL* III 155: *Iovi Balmarcodi*; 1857 = *IGR* III 1082: *θεῷ Βαλμαρκῶδι*; *OGIS* 589 = *IGR* III 1081; Clermont-Ganneau, *Rec. Arch. Or.* 1 (1888): 94 and 103–4, nos. 2–18.

50. W. Henzen, *ILS* III, no. 5617, reprinted along with *CIL* III 155.

51. Le Bas-Waddington, no. 1858 = *CIL* III 158; *OGIS* 590 = *IGR* III 1079; Clermont-Ganneau (n. 49), 112, no. 12.

far more frequently, for the much better-known deity whose temple was to be found at Heliopolis: Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus. He also is sometimes described in simpler terms, for instance in the inscription of A.D. 115/16 put up at Puteoli by the *cultores Iovis Heliopolitani Berytenses qui Puteolis consistunt*.[52]

The question of how we should approach the nature of the Iuppiter of Heliopolis will be considered below. For the moment it is essential to stress that the entire situation, and the relation of the *Berytenses* to that cult, cannot be understood correctly unless we accept the validity of the case argued by A. H. M. Jones and ultimately refined by J.-P. Rey-Coquais that, as Strabo clearly states, the Bekaa valley, and with it Heliopolis, was from the beginning part of the territory of Berytus.[53] The cult of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus will thus have evolved as one observed primarily by the Latin-speaking (and Roman-thinking) *coloni* of Berytus; and it was in this period that the extraordinary group of temples was built, while the cult of Iuppiter of Heliopolis steadily achieved an empire-wide fame. It was only after two centuries, partially no doubt in recognition of that fame, and of the fact of an urban complex existing around the temples, and certainly as a product of the local tensions engendered by the civil war of 193–96, that Septimius Severus made Heliopolis a separate *colonia*. The fact is stated with perfect clarity by Ulpian: *Est et Heliopolitana (colonia) quae a divo Severo per belli civilis occasionem Italicae coloniae rem publicam accepit*.[54] The fact that when this status was granted, the newly acquired title, *Colonia Iulia Augusta Felix Heliopolis*, reflected the settlement of veterans by Augustus two centuries earlier cannot weigh against the clear and irreducible facts. Pliny the Elder, who lists the *coloniae* of Berytus (*Nat. Hist.* 5, 38), Ptolemais under Claudius (5, 75) and Caesarea under Vespasian (5, 69), knows Heliopolis only as a topographical item (5, 80). There is no coinage of Heliopolis until the third century, and no epigraphic evidence unambiguously denoting Heliopolis as a *colonia* until the same period.

The *colonia* of Heliopolis, as it was in the third century, will be discussed later (text to nn. 120–25 below). It should be accepted beyond all doubt that in the first two centuries Heliopolis was a place (however described), and a rapidly evolving cult centre, in the territory of Berytus. Inscriptions from Heliopolis of this period which refer to the *colonia*, or to its *decuriones*

52. *ILS* 300.

53. See A. H. M. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*[2] (1971), 287–88 and n. 85; cf. J.-P. Rey-Coquais, *IGLS* VI: *Baalbek et Beqa'* (1967), 34–35; *JRS* 68 (1978): 52.

54. *Dig.* 50, 15, 1, 2.

or magistrates, must therefore be taken as allusions to the city government of Berytus.[55] The clearest and best-dated instance of such an allusion is a statue base for M. Licinius Pompenna Potitus Urbanus, *sacerdos* of *I(uppiter) O(ptimus) M(aximus) H(eliopolitanus)*, granted the *equus publicus* by Hadrian, and holder of a series of local offices: *decurio*, *pontifex*, *agonothetes*, *duumvir quinquennalis*, *flamen munerarius*.[56] These offices, and the shows referred to, should be thought of as being those of the *colonia* of Berytus. In what specific terms we should describe the status of Heliopolis in this period is not clear. Following Rey-Coquais, however, we may note the apparent presence of a *pagus Augustus*, seemingly making a dedication to the *Dea Syria Nihathe(na)* at Niha, a place located south-west of Heliopolis on the other side of the valley.[57] Heliopolis was perhaps also a *pagus*. But whatever was the technical term employed, we can in any case take it that, as Strabo makes clear, veterans were settled in the valley under Augustus. The fact that in the second century some persons, including soldiers, began to record their *origo* as Heliopolis[58] does not prove that the place was already a *colonia*; rather, its emerging separate identity was a precondition of the grant subsequently made by Septimius Severus.

That emerging identity must have both contributed to and been enhanced by the extraordinary architectural development of the site and the widening fame of the cult. Yet both the chronological sequence of the construction and the sources of initiative (emperor or emperors? *The colonia*? The local population? The cities of the wider Syrian region?) remain almost wholly obscure.[59] Even more profound problems, however, attend the question of the origin and nature of the cult or cults of Heliopolis. The name of the place has always suggested an association with Egypt, as already claimed by Lucian (*dea Syra* 5); and it may indeed derive from the domination of the region by

55. E.g., *IGLS* VI 2937, a dedication to Antoninus Pius by the *colon[i s]plendidissimae [col(oniae)]*; 2793–94, probably of the second century; 2759, King Agrippa (I or II), *patrono col.*; 2760, C. Iulius Sohaemus, *patrono coloniae*; also 2795. Note also 2942 from Niha: *Q. Vesius Patilianus, flamen au[g.], dec. Ber., quaestor col(onorum?) col(oniae?)*.

56. *IGLS* VI 2791.

57. *IGLS* VI 2936; Rey-Coquais, *JRS* 68 (1978): 52. For Niha, see the important study by Rey-Coquais, "Des montagnes au désert: Baetocécé, le pagus Augustus de Niha, la Ghouta à l'est de Damas," in E. Frézouls, ed., *Sociétés urbaines, sociétés rurales dans l'Asie Mineure et la Syrie hellénistiques et romaines* (1987), 198–207, emphasising the contrast with Heliopolis itself.

58. *IGLS* VI, 35 and 40.

59. *IGLS* VI 37–38. For the architectural remains, see T. Wiegand, *Baalbek* I–III (1921–25); cf. M. Lyttelton, *Baroque Architecture in Classical Antiquity* (1974), chaps. 6–8, and F. Ragette, *Baalbek* (1980).

the Ptolemies in the third century B.C. But there is only one inscription, and no certain archaeological evidence, to show that there was a cult or construction there in the Hellenistic period.[60] The temples there are of the imperial period, from the first century A.D. to the third.

But what of the cult itself? Can we confidently identify, behind the Romanised facade, a local "Semitic" cult, or even, as is now claimed, the cult of a typical "Semitic" triad? That is the claim made in, and already incorporated in the title of, the invaluable and extraordinarily learned work on this subject by Y. Hajjar:[61] "Les dieux d'Héliopolis prennent dans les textes épigraphiques et littéraires les noms de Jupiter, Vénus et Mercure ou leurs équivalents grecs selon le cas. Mais il ne fait aucun doute que ces dénominations recouvrent des entités sémitiques avec Hadad, Atargatis et un parédre mineur dont on ignore le nom indigène."

It will need a little time to demonstrate how frail is the logical basis of this assertion, all too typical of what passes for the history of religion whenever the "Orient," or the Near East, or anything supposedly "Semitic" comes to be considered. If the assertion were merely that there was a cult on this site in the Hellenistic period, that cannot be denied. For there is precisely one fragmentary inscription of that period, including the words Διὸς ἱερῷ and [εὐσ]ἐβειαν.[62] We could then suppose that, as in the case of Der el-Kala, where a cult of *Theos Balmarcod* was converted into one of *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Balmarcod* by Latin-speaking Roman veterans, so the cult of "Zeus" (nowhere given any Semitic appellation) at Heliopolis came in the same way to be expressed as that of *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus*. But those are the terms in which such a change must be described. For in speaking of the identities of ancient deities, we are confronted by logical problems more profound than simply the normal fact that what we can perceive is not these divine entities themselves, but what our sources happen to say about them. For the extra problem with the ancient pagan deities is that they were not "entities": they did not exist. What existed, and may be accessible to us, were human beliefs and appellations, cult practices and temples. There is a perfectly valid sense in which ancient deities "were," and can only have been, what people at the time said they were.

If we follow strict logic, the "Semitic" triad of Heliopolis is the purest of

60. F. Millar, "The Problem of Hellenistic Syria," in A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White, eds., *Hellenism and the East* (1987), 110 (= chapter 1 of the present volume).

61. Y. Hajjar, *La triade d'Héliopolis-Baalbek* I–II (1977); III (1985). The quotation is from vol. II, 511–12.

62. Hajjar (n. 61), I, no. 1 = *IGLS* VI, 2990.

modern Semitising constructions. In the epigraphy of the Bekaa valley, not a single allusion to Hadad occurs, still less an equation with Zeus or Iuppiter. Atargatis is indeed recorded once in the area; not, however, at Heliopolis but in the hills on the opposite side of the valley, in the *monumentum* of Ochmaea at Niha, *virgini vati Deae Syr(iae) Nihat(enae)*, or in Greek *παρθένος θεᾶς Ἀταργάτεις*, put up by a *veteranus* named Sex. Allius Iullus (*IGLS* VI 2929). The contrast with the epigraphy of Heliopolis itself which this inscription presents is extremely important; for in this case a local deity *is* identified as local, Nihatena, and as the "Syrian Goddess" and (in Greek) as Atargatis. No such identifications are ever made by contemporary documents in relation to the gods of Heliopolis. We are *not* entitled to assert that *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus* was Hadad (or Hadaran); and all the less so because the same Ochmaea (or Hocmaea) is also described at Niha, in another inscription, as *virgo dei Hadaranis* (*IGLS* VI 2928). At Niha Atargatis and Hadaran may indeed have been worshipped as a divine couple.

There is in fact at Heliopolis no documentary equation of Venus with any "Semitic" goddess, or of Zeus or Mercurius with any "Semitic" god. But nor, to make confusion worse, is there any real indication that these three deities were conceived of as a triad at all (no "triad" of deities is represented on the third-century coins of the city). There are in fact precisely two inscriptions from Heliopolis, both very fragmentary and heavily restored, where we may read in the one case *[I.O.M., V.,] M., Diis Heliopol(itanis)* (*IGLS* VI 2711), and in the other [I.O.] *M., V.* M*., Diis Heliopol(itanis)*, where the first *M* and *V* have not been seen since the early eighteenth century (*IGLS* VI 2712). Otherwise *I(uppiter) O(ptimus) M(aximus) H(eliopolitanus)* is referred to alone on nearly thirty inscriptions;[63] or dedications are addressed in Greek to him alone, as *Διὶ Ἡλ[ι]οπολίτῃ* or *Διὶ μεγ[ίσ]τῳ Ἡλιοπολίτῃ* (*IGLS* VI 2729; cf. 2728, also 2730). Venus/Aphrodite is much more rarely recorded (2732–33, 2893). Mercurius/Hermes appears more frequently (*IGLS* VI 2735–38, 2881, 2895–96; 2912?, 2977).

The inscriptional record from Heliopolis itself and the Bekaa valley thus gives not the slightest justification for any notion of a triad; confirms the predominance of the localised *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus* who was worshipped, mainly in Latin, by the colonial population; and also attests, if weakly, that Venus and Mercurius, as Roman deities, were also worshipped there. From what is said above, however, it will be clear that the whole context of the evolution of the cults of Heliopolis is that of the *territorium* of the *colonia* of

63. See *IGLS* VI, index v.

Berytus. The reflection of the cult in Berytus itself is therefore of crucial importance, in spite of the relatively small harvest of inscriptions from this continuously inhabited city. The immensely learned tabulation and analysis of the relevant inscriptions by Y. Hajjar do indeed offer valuable evidence, and even at first sight offer some support for the notion of a triad. There are in fact precisely two known inscriptions from Berytus where Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus is named along with Venus and Mercurius, and with these alone.[64] A further inscription (mentioned above) offers only traces of the *M* of *[I.O.] M [H.]*, and follows that with Venus and Mercurius, but also with Apollo, Deana [*sic*], Mars Sergit(ensis?), or Ceres, Proserpina, the Fortuna of the Colonia, and the Fata.[65] By contrast, eleven inscriptions from Berytus and the surrounding area refer to *I.O.M.H.* alone,[66] one to *Venus Domina*, and two to *Mercurius Dominus*.[67] An altar from the Museum of Beirut might at first sight provide evidence for a syncretistic identification of Venus Heliopolitana with the Syrian Goddess / Atargatis. But in fact, as Hajjar himself correctly argues, it shows rather a distinction between the two in the mind of the worshipper. Two inscriptions appear on two sides of the altar:[68]

θεᾷ Ἀταργάτι / [σ]τ̣α̣(τίωνος) Γερά̣νων / Ἀρτεμίδι Φωσφόρω . . .

Veneri He/liopolitanae / et Deae Syriae / Geranensi / Deanae Luciferae

It seems clear that two deities are mentioned in both inscriptions, the Dea Syria / Atargatis and Deana Lucifera / Artemis Phosphoros, while the Latin also names a third, Venus Heliopolitana. Though the description of Berytus as a "Latin island in a Semitic ocean" (text to n. 45 above) is far too simplistic, these inscriptions do indeed attest the complexities of the cultural and religious context into which the colonists were settled. But precisely what is distinctive about this area, marking it out from all other parts of the Roman Near East, is that among the other cultural heritages which were not only still present, but active and evolving, a very strong Latin and Roman element was firmly rooted, both on the coast and in the Bekaa valley. Whatever the nature or antiquity of the Zeus already worshipped at Heliopolis, he now came to be characterised by appellations drawn from those of *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus* in Rome, and came later to become known throughout the

64. Hajjar (n. 61), I, 223–24, nos. 196–97.
65. Hajjar (n. 61), I, 221, no. 195.
66. Hajjar (n. 61), I, 227–28, nos. 199–207, 216, 218.
67. Hajjar (n. 61), I, nos. 212–14.
68. Hajjar (n. 61), I, no. 211.

Empire as *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus*.[69] Sometimes, though very rarely indeed, the two other most characteristic deities of Romanised Heliopolis, Venus and Mercurius, were associated with him.[70] But far more often he appears alone. That wider diffusion raises other questions which cannot be discussed here. In this context it is sufficient to emphasise the establishment in Berytus and its extensive territory of a Latin-speaking population of Roman veterans, who worshipped Roman deities, even including a little-known archaic goddess, Mater Matuta, under their Latin names. It was this same context which enabled Valerius Probus to read in Berytus older Latin works which had gone out of fashion in Rome (text to n. 41 above), and which was to give rise to a long-surviving Roman cultural framework, of which the law schools of Berytus were to be an important aspect. It is essential to stress that all our evidence up to the fourth century does indeed present the teaching and learning of Roman law as an aspect of the "rather more Roman" city that Berytus was, and that we should speak of "law schools" rather than of "the law school." The second of these points is clearly and succinctly expressed in the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* of the middle of the fourth century: *Berytus civitas valde deliciosa et auditoria legum habens, per quam omnia iudicia Romanorum ⟨stare videntur⟩*.[71]

In the light of this it must be all the more of a puzzle that the most famous of all Roman jurists, Ulpian, was to come not from Berytus but from the Phoenician-Greek city of Tyre, which had become a nominal *colonia* only in his own life-time. It is time to turn to the later *coloniae* of the Roman Near East, beginning with the distinctive group of three on the borders of, or at the heart of, the Holy Land.

Ptolemais, Caesarea, Aelia Capitolina

These three *coloniae*, recently discussed very well by Benjamin Isaac,[72] form a clearly marked-out group, contrasting both with Berytus, on the one hand, and with the much larger group of nominal *coloniae* of the Severan period, and the following decades, on the other. It seems that all three foundations

69. For the cult beyond its native areas, whose ramifications cannot be followed here, see Hajjar (n. 61), I, 188–220, 261–416.

70. Hajjar (n. 61), I, 318, no. 268 (Athens); 341, no. 281 (Zellhausen, Germania Superior), a dedication by a *praefectus cohortis* from Berytus (the only examples).

71. *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* 25 (*Sources Chrétiennes* 124, ed. J. Rougé [1966], 158).

72. B. Isaac, "Roman Colonies in Judaea: The Foundation of Aelia Capitolina," *Talanta* 12–13 (1980–81): 31 (reprinted with revisions in B. Isaac, *The Near East under Roman Rule, Selected Papers* [1998]).

were reflections of local conflicts, involving the Jews and their Roman rulers, and indeed in the latter two cases there is no room for doubt on the matter. In the case of Ptolemais, the earliest of them, a military context, and indeed an actual veteran settlement, is probable, as Isaac has shown. But, perhaps surprisingly, the actual process, or moment, of foundation cannot be located within either of Josephus' two detailed narratives of the period. Indeed, by contrast with Berytus (n. 21 above), Josephus nowhere alludes to either Ptolemais or Caesarea as a *colonia*/*ἀποικία*. The fact that Ptolemais' foundation as a *colonia* (whatever that in practise meant) took place under Claudius (A.D. 41–54) is, however, attested by Pliny the Elder, writing in the 70s.[73] As an event, the foundation of the *nova colonia* is also reflected in a milestone of A.D. 56, on the coast road from Antioch via Berytus to Ptolemais.[74] Here too, of course, whatever actual settlement of veterans took place did so in the context of an ancient city, which in this instance had already acquired a Greek dynastic name in the Hellenistic period.[75] As "Ptolemais," or, as it appears on coins of Claudius, *Γερμανικεῖς*, it continued to mint Greek coins up to A.D. 51/2, so the *colonia* belongs in the last years of the reign. Thereafter the coins show the city with its full Latin title *Col(onia) Cla(udia) Stab(ilis) Ger(manica) Felix Ptol(emais)*.[76]

There is also just sufficient evidence from the surrounding area to make clear that veterans actually were settled. An inscription from beside the Roman road running north along the coast reads *Imp. Ner. / Caesari / Col. Ptol. / Veter. /, vici Nea Come et Gedru*.[77] The grammar is far from clear, but the refer-

73. Plin., *Nat. Hist*. 5, 75: *Colonia Claudi Caesaris Ptolemais, quae quondam Acce*.

74. P. Thomsen, "Die römischen Meilensteine der Provinzen Syria, Arabia und Palaestina," *ZDPV* 40 (1917): 1, on 18, no. 9, a2 (from the Nahr el-Ghadir, south of Beirut): *[Nero Cl]audius [Caesar Au]g(ustus) Germanicus [trib. potest.] bis, cos. [designa]tus iterum [viam?] ab Antiochea [munivit? ad n]ovam colon[ia]m [Ptolemaid]a*. . . . See R. G. Goodchild, "The Coast Road of Phoenicia and Its Roman Milestones," *Berytus* 9 (1988–89): 91 and pl. xx.

75. For the evidence, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 121–25; cf. N. Kashtan, "Akko-Ptolemais: A Maritime Metropolis in Hellenistic and Early Roman Times, 332 B.C.E.–70 C.E., as Seen through the Literary Sources," *Med. Hist. Rev*. 3 (1988): 37.

76. See L. Kadman, *The Coinage of Akko-Ptolemais* (1961); see, for revisions of Kadman's views, H. Seyrig, "Le monnayage de Ptolmais en Phénicie," *RN* 4 (1962): 29 = *Scripta Numismatica* (1986), 261; "Deux émissions coloniales incertaines," *RN* 11 (1969): 47, who discusses, on p. 158, the legend COL. C(onstans?) ST PTOL, found on some examples. I owe to Alla Stein the information that the Greek coinage of Ptolemais terminates by A.D. 51/2, rather than 52/3 as Kadman states.

77. M. Avi-Yonah, "Newly-Discovered Latin and Greek Inscriptions," *QDAP* 12 (1946): 84, 85, no. 2 = *AE* 1948, 142.

ence to veterans is certain, and there is probably an allusion to two different villages, one known by a Greek name and one by a Semitic one. There seems no reason to dispute its identification with Talmudic GDRW / modern Kh. Jidru, south-east of Akko. Also south-east of Akko we have a fragmentary Latin inscription with the words *pago* and *vicinal* on separate lines[78]—enough to suggest the existence of a *pagus* of settlers here, as at Niha in the Bekaa valley.

Some support, but far from wholly certain, for the idea of an actual settlement of veterans, is offered by the coinage of the city as a *colonia*; the earliest coins, struck under Nero, name DIVOS CLAUD and have the normal symbol of the founder with his plough marking out the boundary. Four legionary standards are represented, but no agreement has been reached on the identification of the tiny numbers shown on them.[79] It is none the less clear that some actual settlement of veterans took place. But from the very slight evidence for the history of the city as a *colonia* nothing is really certain except that it continued to mint coins with Latin legends identifying itself as a *colonia* into the reign of Valerian and Gallienus. There appear, however, to be no Latin inscriptions from the city to illustrate public use of Latin there. The real nature of the social and cultural mix produced by the process of foundation must remain mysterious. But here too we can be reasonably certain that no wholesale removal or disturbance of the existing population took place; the massacre of 2,000 Jews, and the imprisonment of many others, by the Ptolemaeans in A.D. 66 must be seen as reflections of long-standing communal tensions, as they were in other cities of the region.[80] On any construction the foundation of a *colonia* here and at this moment remains a puzzle. It is true, as Isaac points out, that there had been violent intercommunal clashes between Jews and Samaritans in the procuratorship of Ventidius Cumanus (probably A.D. 48–52), which required the judicial intervention of the imperial *legatus* of Syria, Ummidius Quadratus, and led to the dismissal of the *procurator* himself.[81] But there is nothing to show that Quadratus, in visiting

78. Avi-Yonah (n. 77), 86, no. 3 = *AE* 1948, 143. J. Meyer, "A Centurial Stone from Shavei Tziyyon," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 7 (1983–84): 119, publishes what may be a centuriation *cippus* from the territory of Akko. Note also the very full and suggestive study by Sh. Applebaum, "The Roman Colony of Ptolemais—'Ake and Its Territory,'" in his *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times: Historical and Archaeological Essays* (1989), 711.

79. Seyrig (n. 76), 43–44. Dr. C. J. Howgego kindly tells me that the numerals III, VI, X?, and XI(+?) can be read.

80. Josephus, *BJ* 2, 477.

81. Isaac (n. 72), 37.

Judaea to settle these disputes, had to bring any significant legionary forces with him, or that *coloni* from Ptolemais subsequently played any role in repressing troubles in Judaea, or in the Jewish War itself (as a contingent from Berytus had done earlier, after Herod's death in 4 B.C.).[82] There is also the puzzle of the limited legal rights given to the new *colonia*. We would naturally suppose that the Empire saw a progression from "real" *coloniae*, involving the settlement of veterans and the granting of *ius Italicum* and full remission of tribute, to "nominal" *coloniae*, which might receive full or partial rights depending on the *indulgentia* of the emperor. But in fact Ulpian is categorical as to the absence of privileges on the part of this *colonia* (*Dig*. 50, 15, 16): *Ptolemaeensium enim colonia, quae inter Phoenicen et Palaestinam sita est, nihil praeter nomen coloniae habet*. Can it be that, far from being a fundamental conception of Roman public law, integral to the overseas *coloniae* of the classical period, the *ius Italicum* was a legal construct which evolved in the course of the Empire?[83] Or was it, as Miss Levick suggested to me, that Ptolemais had lost some rights in the period between the foundation and the composition of Ulpian's *De Censibus* under Caracalla?

A closely comparable question presents itself in the case of the next *colonia* founded in the Holy Land, Caesarea. Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist*. 5, 69) carefully brings the history of the town right up to date: *Stratonis Turris, eadem Caesarea ab Herode rege condita, nunc Colonia Prima a Vespasiano Imperatore deducta*. In doing so he reproduces almost in full the formal titulature of the new *colonia*, as it was to appear on the coins, from the reign of Domitian onwards: *Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Caesarea*.[84] In this case there can be no reason to doubt that the new status reflected the role of Caesarea as a military base in the Jewish War, conducted of course by Vespasian himself up to the moment of his coup d'état; indeed if we follow Josephus, it had been there that Vespasian had first been hailed as emperor by his troops, in the summer of A.D. 69.[85]

No source suggests that any *deductio* of veterans took place, and no legionary standards appear on the colonial coinage. As Isaac has pointed out, the

82. Josephus, *BJ* 2, 67; *Ant*. 17, 287.

83. For this view, see F. T. Hinrichs, *Die Geschichte der gromatischen Institutionen* (1974), 147–48. Compare, however, J. Bleicken, "*In provinciali solo dominium populi Romani est vel Caesaris*. Zur Kolonisationspolitik der ausgehenden Republik und frühen Kaiserzeit," *Chiron* 4 (1974): 359, attributing the concept of *ius Italicum* to Augustus.

84. See L. Kadman, *The Coins of Caesarea Maritima* (1957).

85. *BJ* 4, 588–604; see Isaac (n. 72), 38–44.

language in which the jurist Paulus speaks of the status granted to the inhabitants by Vespasian clearly suggests a grant to an existing population (*Dig*. 50, 15, 8, 7): *Divus Vespasianus Caesarienses colonos fecit, non adiecto, ut et iuris Italici essent, sed tributum his remisit capitis; sed divus Titus etiam solum immune factum interpretatus est*.

Ulpian confirms that the Colonia Caesariensis did not enjoy the *ius Italicum* (*Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 6). It seems from the way that the jurists (though no earlier source) express themselves that they saw *coloniae* as belonging potentially to four possible grades: (1) no privileges; (2) partial remission of *tributum*; (3) full remission of *tributum*; and (4) *ius Italicum*. Paulus' account indicates that Vespasian, on granting the status of *colonia*, gave along with it only remission of *tributum capitis*. It can be taken as certain that Titus' interpretation, giving the remission a wider definition, will have been in response to a submission by the city, either transmitted by the *legatus* of Judaea or (more likely) brought before him by an embassy.

By the standards of a middle-rank provincial town, the life of Caesarea is illustrated, or potentially illustrated, by quite an extensive range of literature, above all Christian. For it was there for several decades that Origen taught, there that Pamphilus established his library, and there above all that Eusebius lived, wrote, and served as bishop. Yet Eusebius for instance never refers to Caesarea's status as *colonia*. Nor, more significantly, does Gregorius of Neocaesarea, for whom, as we saw, Berytus was a "more Roman" city (text to n. 42 above), but Caesarea was merely the seat of the governor of Syria Palaestina, and by divine providence the place where he came to be a pupil of Origen. Nothing in any of these sources would suggest to us that Caesarea was not still a Greek city like any other. The same is largely true of inscriptions: witness the second-century inscription of a boxer from Aphrodisias cited earlier (text to n. 5 above), in which the town appears as *Caesarea Stratōnos*, a curious mixture of the two names which it had successively borne before becoming a *colonia*. However, there is some slight inscriptional evidence reflecting the new status of the place. One item is a remarkable Greek inscription of the end of the second century from Mount Carmel, which also illustrates the attraction of the Zeus, or Iuppiter, of Heliopolis: *Διὶ Ἡλιοπολείτῃ Καρμήλῳ / Γ. Ἰούλ. Εὐτυχὰς / κόλ(ων) Καισαρεύς*. It is inscribed on the base of a statue of which only the toes of one foot remain.[86] The localisation of a cult of the deity of Heliopolis on Mount Carmel raises complex problems of reli-

86. M. Avi-Yonah, "Mount Carmel and the God of Baalbek," *IEJ* 2 (1952): 118 = *AE* 1952, 206 = *SEG* XIV 832 = Hajjar (n. 61), I, no. 227, and pl. lxxxvi.

gious history. For the present what is relevant is the self-identification of the dedicator (evidently the descendant of a Greek family which had received the citizenship at least some decades before the foundation of the *colonia*) as a *κόλ(ων) Καισαρεύς*. The pseudo-Greek term is paralleled elsewhere in the Near East: one example, from Palmyra, has already been noted (text to n. 7 above).

The use of Latin in the *colonia* is now attested by a considerable number of inscriptions. There is a dedication by a lady named [Cleo?]patra,[87] and more important, the well-known inscription of a man who, or whose family, gained the citizenship in the Flavian period: *M. Fl. Agrippam, pontif., IIviral. Col. I Fl. Aug. Caesareae, oratorem, ex dec. dec., pec. publ.* (*ILS* 7206 = Lehmann and Holum [n. 87 below], no. 3). A single column from near the city contains both a dedication to a *legatus* of the second or third century, by a *duo[vir]* or *duo[viri]*, perhaps *ex dec. dec. pec. publ.*[88] More significant still is the pair of inscriptions of the first half of the third century found in the theatre. One names Aur. Fl. Theophilus, an *eques Romanus* and *decurio* of the *metropolis*, as being responsible for carrying out the decree of the decurions of the colony to honour Val. Calpurnianus, *praefectus* of Mesopotamia and Osrhoene, *pat(rono) metr(opolis - eos?) ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*.[89] The other is a dedication to Aelius Iulianus, *proc. Aug. n.*, also *patr(ono) metr(opolis?) ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*.[90] The inscriptions represent valuable epigraphic confirmation of a phenomenon which is better attested on third-century coinage, namely the combination of the title *colonia* with the Greek status term for major provincial cities, *metropolis*.[91] If there was at any time a precise defini-

87. *AE* 1964, 188 = M. L. Lehmann and K. G. Holum, *The Greek and Latin Inscriptions of Caesarea Maritima* (2000), no. 44. *[Coloniae] Primae Fl. Aug. [Caesareae] / . . [Cleo]patra mater eius hoc f(ieri) i(ussit)*; but see the better reading by Werner Eck cited there: *[?Ex testamento—IIviral(is) (?) col.] Primae Fl(aviae) Aug(ustae) / [Caesareae—/—?Cleo]patra mater eius her(es) [facere iussit?]*.

88. *AE* 1987, 960a = Lehmann and Holum (n. 87), no. 8.

89. *AE* 1985, 830a = W. Eck, *ZPE* 113 (1996): 129ff. = Lehmann and Holum (n. 87), no. 10.

90. *AE* 1985, 830b = Lehmann and Holum (n. 87), no. 11. See now H. M. Cotton and W. Eck, "A New Inscription from Caesarea Maritima and the Local Elite of Caesarea Maritima," in L. Rutgers, ed., *What Athens Has to Do with Jerusalem. Festschrift for Gideon Foerster* (2002), 371–87, which discusses the use of Latin by members of the ruling families of Caesarea.

91. For a useful sketch of the evidence, see A. Kindler, "The Status of Cities in the Syro-Palestinian Area as Reflected in Their Coins," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 6–7 (1982–83): 76.

tion of the conditions under which a city could call itself a *metropolis*, it is not clear in our sources. It is at least certain that the title could be formally asked for from the emperor and conferred by him.[92] But it is equally clear that it proliferated in the course of the empire and was not, for instance, confined to one city in each province.

More important in the present context is the fact that it is a Greek status title, which could be borne by *coloniae* as by purely Greek cities. In the case of the two inscriptions just cited indeed, while the use of Latin has survived, the actual title *colonia* has been displaced by *metropolis*. By contrast the coinage of Caesarea from Severus Alexander to Volusianus gives the title *Col. I F. Aug. F(elix?) C(?) Caes. Metrop.*[93] All the evidence combines to suggest that the normal language of Caesarea was Greek. It was there that, according to the Talmud of Jerusalem, Rabbi Levi bar Haitah, heard the Shema ("Hear, O Israel") being recited in Greek.[94] He will have been in little danger of encountering the same phenomenon in Latin.

The last of the *coloniae* of this period was Aelia Capitolina, Jerusalem. Alone of all the *coloniae* of the Near East, it arose from the destruction of an existing city and the wholesale replacement of its population by a new one. It is not necessary here to enter into the question of the situation of Jerusalem after the Jewish War of A.D. 66, the problem of whether the foundation of a *colonia* had been decided on before the Bar Kochba war of A.D. 132–35, or whether Jerusalem was ever captured by the rebels, and then recaptured by the Romans.[95] Whatever the immediate background, there is no reason to doubt Cassius Dio's report that a new city called Aelia Capitolina was founded in the place of the one which had been destroyed, and that the temple was replaced by a pagan temple to "Zeus" (Juppiter Capitolinus);[96] a gentile pagan population also took the place of a Jewish one;[97] hence the first bishop of non-Jewish origin was in office there soon after the re-foundation (Eusebius, *HE* 4, 6, 4). We can assume that in this case large-scale re-building accompanied the foundation, and accounts of this process are offered later by

92. See, e.g., F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (1977), 409. No detailed study of the use of the term is known to me.

93. Kadman (n. 84), 102–51.

94. *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Sotah* 7, 1, 21a.

95. For the basic evidence, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 534–35.

96. Dio 69, 12, 1–2. If he meant by saying *καὶ εἰς τὸν τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τόπον ναὸν τῷ Διὶ ἕτερον ἀντεγείραντος* that the temple of Juppiter literally stood on the site of the Temple, he was wrong.

97. Zonaras 11, 23C; Malalas, *Chron.* 279.

the *Chronicon Paschale* and by Joannes Malalas.[98] Although much archaeological effort has been devoted in recent years to Roman and Byzantine Aelia, the results remain both controversial and incompletely published, and there is little that can be said with certainty as to the second-century city or the quarters of the Legion X Fretensis which may have occupied part of it.[99]

There is nothing in our evidence to make clear whether the citizens of the new *colonia* were drawn from veterans or from civilians; if the latter, a new population must have been recruited, for contemporary sources make clear that Jews were excluded.[100] A *colonia* formed not from an existing city but from new civilian settlers would however be unique in this period, and it may be better to accept the colonial coins with *vexilla* of the legion X Fretensis as evidence that veterans were settled. If so, however, Aelia then provides a unique combination of a legionary camp with a *colonia* of veterans from the same legion.[101] In either case, Aelia Capitolina and Mursa in Pannonia Inferior represent the only two "genuine" *coloniae* of Hadrian's reign, and the last such *coloniae* in the history of Rome.[102]

With the new foundation there was associated an extensive programme of road building in Judaea, and milestones from the relevant roads reflect, though in Greek, the new status and name of Jerusalem: for instance *ἀπὸ κολ. Αἰλίας Καπιτωλ. μιλ. ϵ′*.[103] We would naturally suppose that the impact of the foundation on the surrounding territory was considerable. Given the model of Berytus, we might also suppose that Aelia, as (apparently) a new veteran *colonia*, backed by a legionary camp, on a site whose original population had either been slaughtered or driven out, would have represented another long-standing "Latin island." If it did, however, there is remarkably little evidence to show it. Christian sources of course have precisely focused interests, but they do reveal that, apart from the temple of Juppiter, there was also one of Venus, subsequently identified as the site of the Holy Sepulchre.[104] But as an active expression of the city's colonial status and Latin character we have almost nothing to go on except its coins, where it ap-

98. *Chron. Pasch.* 1, 474; Malalas, *Chron.* 279. Note the translation by E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott (1986).

99. For a general account, see N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (1984), 205–6. See also H. Geva, "The Camp of the Tenth Legion at Jerusalem: An Archaeological Reconstruction," *IEJ* 34 (1984): 239; R. Reich, "Four Notes on Jerusalem," *IEJ* 37 (1987): 188, on 164–65.

100. Justin, 1 *Apol.* 47, 6; Eusebius, *HE* 4, 6, 4, quoting Ariston of Pella.

101. For these points, see Isaac (n. 72), 46–47.

102. See M. Zahrnt, "Vermeintliche Kolonien des Kaisers Hadrian," *ZPE* 71 (1988): 229.

103. *CIL* III, 117 = 6649 = *OGIS* 600; cf. *IGR* III 1385 and Thomsen (n. 74), 74–75.

104. E. D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, A.D. 312–460* (1982), 2.

pears as *Col. Ael. Cap*. and then, from Septimius Severus onwards, as *Col. Ael. Cap. Comm(odiana) Pia Felix*.[105] This latter name appears on just one inscription from the city, from near the southern wall of the Temple mount. Dating from the reign of Severus, it provides the title *[Colonia Ael]ia Kap(itolina) Commo[diana]*.[106]

We are therefore left with a puzzle, on which the available evidence sheds no real light. We have very little to illustrate the social composition, public cults, or nature of local self-government (which we may assume was conducted by *duumviri* and a council of *decuriones*). Some relevant Latin inscriptions are indeed available: for instance a statue base in honour of Antoninus Pius *d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)* (*CIL* III 6639); and another from the lintel of the Roman gate underlying the Damascus Gate, naming the *Colonia Aelia Capitolina*.[107] In what seems to be the only scholarly publication of it, the inscription is reported to read *Co. Ael. Cap. d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*.[108]

The availability of such fragments of evidence will hardly serve to obscure our total ignorance of the dominant languages and the self-identification of the inhabitants of what had been Jerusalem (and was frequently still called Jerusalem by Christian writers) in its period as the *Colonia Aelia Capitolina*. It is only when we reach the visit by the western pilgrim "Egeria" in the 380s, that we learn that Christian services there were conducted in Greek, with a regular translation into Aramaic, and a secondary translation, when necessary, into Latin.[109] Much had no doubt changed since Hadrian's trium-

105. See L. Kadman, *The Coins of Aelia Capitolina* (1956).

106. *AE* 1984, 914 = *AE* 1997, 1562; cf. H. M. Cotton and W. Eck, "Ein Ehrenbogen für Septimius Severus und seine Familie in Jerusalem," in E. Dabrowa, ed., *Donum Amicitiae. Studies in Ancient History Offered by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of the Anniversary of the Foundation of Ancient History in the Jagiellonian University of Kraków* 1997, 11–20.

107. Alluded to in various semi-popular reports, e.g., B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord* (1975), 235 (ascribed to Hadrian), 237, 239. A different impression, both of the location and of the reading of the inscription, is given by N. Avigad, *Discovering Jerusalem* (1984), 206.

108. R. W. Hamilton, "Excavations against the N. Wall, Jerusalem," *QDAP* 11 (1944): on 22–23. For yet another impressionistic report of the area, see M. Magen, "Recovering Roman Jerusalem: The Excavations beneath the Damascus Gate," *Bibl. Arch. Rev*. 15 (1988): 48. For a survey of the known Greek and Latin inscriptions, of all periods, from Jerusalem, see P. Thomsen, *Die griechischen und lateinischen Inschriften der Stadt Jerusalem* (1922), with a Supplement in *ZDPV* 64 (1941): 203. For some updates, see B. Issac, "Inscriptions from Jerusalem after the First Revolt" and "Epigraphic Remains from the Byzantine Period," in Y. Tsafrir and S. Safrai, eds., *The History of Jerusalem: The Roman and Byzantine Periods (70–638 CE)* (1999), 167–79, 383–389 (in Hebrew).

109. *Peregrinatio Egeriae* 47, 3–4; see P. Maraval, "Égérie, journal de voyage" (*Sources Chrétiennes* 296, 1982).

phant creation of a Roman *colonia* on the site, with a Roman constitution and Roman gods. But the nature and evolution of that change escapes us entirely.

The Reign of Septimius Severus

With the ascent to the throne of Septimius Severus in A.D. 193 a quite new phase opens in the nature of Roman *coloniae* in the Near East. As we will see, it is not beyond possibility that his origins in Tripolitania, a Latin-speaking area whose Punic sub-culture was a distant product of Phoenician colonisation, had some effect on this change. Equally, it may be relevant that his wife, Iulia Domna, came from the city of Emesa in Syria, a place which contemporaries tended to characterise as "Phoenician," even though it was situated not on the coast but on the middle Orontes. Once again, the most difficult problems of ethnic identity present themselves.

Two more obvious influences on the scale and nature of the formation of new *coloniae* in this period were the civil war fought between Severus and Pescennius Niger, the *legatus* of Syria, and the extension of the Roman frontier from the Euphrates to the Tigris. The title of *colonia* was to be conferred on a whole series of places, mostly very little known or understood, in the new provinces of Mesopotamia and Osrhoene. One place which received it subsequently is, however, rather better known, namely Edessa/Orhai, which until 213/14 was the capital of the small kingdom of Abgar.

The most clearly attested factor in this new phase was the use of the rank or title of *colonia* as part of the repertoire of imperial rewards (with corresponding punishments), meted out to cities in respect of the attitude they had taken in the civil war of 193–96.[110] Once again rabbinic literature happens to offer a remarkably vivid and apposite reflection of just this situation: the people of a city are recorded as asking a king (emperor) to make their city a *colonia* (QLWNY'), because they think it a good moment, as two of his enemies have just been defeated.[111]

Contemporary sources make the connection between civil war and grants of colonial status quite explicit, and in one case a combination of evidence provides a precise date. Herodian records that there were local hostilities between Laodicea and Antioch and between Berytus and Tyre, and that Lao-

110. For these processes, see R. Ziegler, "Antiochia, Laodicea und Sidon in der Politik der Severer," *Chiron* 8 (1978): 493.

111. *Sifre Deut.* 26, 40, in the edition by L. Finkelstein (1939; repr. 1969). I owed the reference to M. Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, A.D. 132–212* (1983), 140, who duly observes (in his n. 101) the relevance of this to the civil war period.

dicea and Tyre were quick to align themselves with Severus on the news of his victory over Pescennius Niger in Cappadocia in 194; Laodicea was then sacked by Niger's troops.[112] This sack, and reports of the rewards which then followed for Laodicea, appear in the sixth-century Chronicle of Malalas: Severus granted senatorial rank to the leading men of the city, gave large sums of money for public expenditures, built various public buildings, and decreed that the city should have the status of *metropolis* and be named after himself.[113]

The latter point is perhaps a confusion with Tyre, which was also rewarded (see below). More significant is the fact that the rank of *metropolis* retained its relevance in Malalas' time; but the status of *colonia*, which Laodicea also received, has dropped out of memory. But it is that which Ulpian, as a contemporary and a Roman jurist, had recorded, and related emphatically to the civil war: *Est et Laodicena colonia in Syria Coele, cui divus Severus ius Italicum ob belli civilis merita concessit*.[114] Yet Malalas' perspective was not entirely misleading, for a weight from Laodicea published by H. Seyrig shows that the year 205/6 counted as the 9th of the *kolonia*, but the 13th of the *metropoliteia* (the status of *metropolis*).[115] Severus had thus granted the title of *metropolis* on his arrival in 194, but that of *colonia* only in 198, when he was again in the Syrian region.

Both titles are reflected in the designation of an athlete from Laodicea, in an inscription of A.D. 221, as *κόλων Λα⟨ο⟩[δι]κεὺς μητροπολείτης κα[ὶ] ἄλλων πόλεων πολείτης*.[116] The pseudo-Greek term *κόλων* is used again; and the Romano-Greek public character of the city is reflected equally in its coins. Under Caracalla one example has *LAU COL METRO IUL*;[117] from then on a variety of Latin terms appear, including *AETERNUM BENEFICIUM* and *ROMAE FEL*. But a substantial series with the Latin/Greek legend *COL LAOD METROPOLEOS* does not appear until the reign of Philip, ceasing

112. Herodian 3, 3, 3–5. See Ziegler (n. 110), 474–75.

113. Malalas 293–94.

114. *Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 3. Cf. 50, 15, 8, 3 (Paulus).

115. H. Seyrig, "Un poids de Laodicée," *Syria* 40 (1963): 30: *ἔτους θ΄ τῆς κολωνίας, γι΄ τῆς μητροπολιτείας, τ[οῦ] καὶ γνσ΄*. The latter figure, 253, establishes the date 205/6. Cf. the weight listed by H. Seyrig, *Bull. Mus. Beyrouth* 8 (1949): 64, no. 38: *ἔτους δι΄ τῆς κολωνείας* (hence A.D. 210/11).

116. *IGR* III 1012 = *IGLS* IV 1265 = Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*, no. 85.

117. *SNG, Danish National Museum: Syria*, no. 366. It is curious that some of these colonial coins in Latin, as well as earlier Greek issues of the city, were counter-marked COL. See C. J. Howgego, *Greek Imperial Countermarks* (1985), no. 586.

in that of Gallus.[118] With that, as it seems, all reflection of the colonial status of the city also ceases. What is significant however is the clear dating of the title *metropolis* to 194 and of *colonia* to 198, and the connection of both with the posture adopted by the city in the civil war.

Apart from Antioch and Laodicea, the other pair of mutually hostile neighbours which Herodian mentioned (text to n. 112 above) was Tyre, which took the Severan side, and Berytus. Tyre too became a *colonia*, as we will see below. But the reference also provides a perfectly clear and intelligible framework for the elevation of Heliopolis to the rank of an independent city with the status of *colonia*. That is to say that the urban conglomeration (*pagus*?) which already existed around the long-famous temple of Juppiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus in the Bekaa valley (above) was now detached from the territory of the *colonia* of Berytus on the coast. The deployment of political favour, and disfavour, in this way finds an exact parallel under Constantine, when the Emperor granted the port of Gaza, Maiouma, city status as a reward for the Christian faith of its inhabitants. It was thus detached from Gaza, whose population remained predominantly pagan.[119]

It may have been merely that Berytus incurred displeasure and was punished by the loss of territory. Alternatively the people of Heliopolis, like the inhabitants of the *vicus Patavissensium* in Dacia, may have petitioned Severus, as Ulpian records (*Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 9): *In Dacia . . . Patavissensium vicus, qui a divo Severo ius coloniae impetravit*. But at any rate it is Ulpian who makes quite clear the relevance of the civil war in the case of Heliopolis (*Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 2): *Heliopolitana (colonia), quae a divo Severo per belli civilis occasionem Italicae coloniae rem publicam accepit*. Almost at the same moment as Ulpian was writing we find Caracalla in A.D. 215 issuing a rescript about a case in which the *res publica Heliopolitanorum* had come into possession of some property. It is interesting (see below) that a party to the suit is called Sossianus (*CJ* 8, 17, 4).

As we have seen, the area was already "colonial," being part of the distinctive zone of Latin and Roman culture created by the settlement of legionaries at Berytus and in its wide *territorium*. There is nothing in the least surprising or confusing in the fact that the formal title of the new *colonia* reflected its historical origins in the veteran settlement under Augustus: *Colonia Iulia Augusta Felix Heliopolis*. Not having been an independent city, the place had of course minted no coins until Severus' reign. From Severus to Gallienus we

118. *BMC Syria*, 258–63.

119. Eusebius, *VC* 4, 38–39; Sozomenus, *HE* 5, 3, 6–8.

duly find coins with COL (IUL AUG FEL) HEL.[120] Under Philip and his son the colonial coins also portray the standards of the two legions, the V Macedonica and VIII Augusta, which had taken part in the original settlement; a few also incorporate the conventional scene of the founder ploughing.[121] The coins, like the title of the *colonia*, should be read as conscious historical reminiscence, or retrospection.

It is in keeping with the already established Latin, or Roman, character of the area that we have a much better series of Latin inscriptions, from the reign of Caracalla to the Tetrarchy, illustrating its colonial status than from any other place. What is perhaps the earliest is probably a dedication to Caracalla *ex dec(reto) dec(urionum) splendissimae col(oniae) Iul(iae) Aug(ustae) Fel(icis) Hel(iopolis)* (*IGLS* VI 2899). Another is securely dated to A.D. 213 (*IGLS* VI 2918); under Gordian a *decurio* of the *colonia* erected a "torch-bearing" statue to mark his decurionate: *statuam luciferam decurionatus sui hic conlo[ca]tam* (*IGLS* VI 2710); a dedication (*IGLS* VI 2772) and a milestone (*IGLS* VI 2900) date to the Tetrarchic period, as do newly published milestones from the Heliopolis-Berytus road—*Col[(onia) Iul(ia) Aug(usta) Fel(ix)] Hel(iopolis)*—and from the north-eastern limits of the city's territory, near the sources of the Orontes.[122] There the series of local Latin inscriptions of the *colonia* ends, along with the general decline of the epigraphic habit. There is also an undated dedication (*IGLS* VI 2743) by Baebius Aurelianus Dius *dec. col. Hel.* But one native of the third-century *colonia*, L. Trebonius Sossianus (for the name, text following n. 119), who entered the Roman army and rose to the rank of *primus pilus*, was to leave a record of himself and his city both in Rome and at Philippopolis in Arabia. On the Janiculum in Rome he put up under Gordian an inscription which perfectly expressed both the local and the "Roman" patriotism of Heliopolis: *I.O.M.H., conservatori imperii d(omini) n(ostri) Gordiani Pii Fel. Invicti Aug(usti), L. Trebonius Fab. Sossianus, colonia Heliopoli, (centurio) frum(entarius) leg. III Fl(aviae) Gordianae p.p.*[123] A few years later the same man, now a *p(rimus) p(ilus) domo col. Hel.*, honoured C. Iulius Priscus,

120. *BMC Syria*, 290–95.

121. L. Okamura, "Western Legions in Baalbek, Lebanon: Colonial Coins (A.D. 244–247) of the Philippi," *Historia* 37 (1988): 126. I owe to Dr. C. J. Howgego the information that the standards form part of a representation of what appears to be a group of cult statues, two of which are holding the standards.

122. Published by Ch. Ghadban, "Les frontières du territoire d'Héliopolis-Baalbek à la lumière de nouveaux documents," in *La géographie administrative et politique d'Alexandre à Mahomet* (1982), 143, on 151 and 160 (Khirbet Choukan near the Orontes).

123. *ILS* 4287 = Hajjar (n. 61) I, no. 290, and II, pl. cxii.

the brother of the emperor Philip, at their native city, Philippopolis (now itself a *colonia*).[124]

Even in Heliopolis we would expect that both before and after the conferment of the new status Greek will have been current as well as Latin; and we do duly find one Greek inscription which expresses the colonial character of the place. A relief from the stairway of the main temple of Baalbek is accompanied by a brief inscription contained in a cartouche: *Νάρκισος Κασίου, βουλευτικὸς κολ(ωνείας) Ἡλ(ιουπόλεως)*.[125] The inscription has sometimes been taken to date to the first half of the second century, and hence to provide evidence that from the beginning Heliopolis was an independent *colonia*. But the date is hypothetical, and a single brief inscription such as this cannot possibly stand against the accumulation of other evidence. In fact it is to be seen as a Greek reflection, of a familiar type, of the institutions of Severus' new foundation.

The other place which Herodian (text to n. 112 above) records as having displayed a timely loyalty to Severus in 194 was the city of Tyre. It can hardly be doubted that its acquisition from Severus of the rank of *colonia* and the privilege of *ius Italicum* came about precisely for that reason. But if that is so, its proud citizen Domitius Ulpianus, certainly born some decades before the change of status, chooses to record the fact in more grandiose language, reflecting the antiquity of the city and its long-standing relation with Rome: *ut est in Syria Phoenice splendidissima Tyriorum colonia, unde mihi origo est, nobilis regionibus, serie saeculorum antiquissima, armipotens, foederis quod cum Romanis percussit tenacissima; huic enim divus Severus et imperator noster ob egregiam in rem publicam imperiumque Romanum insignem fidem ius Italicum dedit*.[126] From Ulpian's wording the date should not be earlier than A.D. 198, when Caracalla (*imperator noster*) became joint Augustus with Severus; and it very probably was precisely 198, the same date as Laodicea.

Tyre, like other places, was now simultaneously a *colonia* and a *metropolis*. The scanty epigraphy of the city, largely confined to grave inscriptions of the late Roman period, offers very little confirmation of this, although one remarkable new discovery will be mentioned below. But the coins of Severus' reign already show the legend *SEP(timia) TURUS METROP(olis) COLONI(a)*, and similar legends, with variations, continue up to the reign of Gallienus. In the absence of all other evidence the fact that for a period under Elagabal

124. *ILS* 9005.

125. *IGLS* VI 2935.

126. *Dig.* 50, 15, 1, pr; cf. 50, 15, 8, 4 (Paulus): *Eiusdem iuris et Tyriorum civitas a divis Severo et Antonino facta est*.

(A.D. 218–22) the city minted with the Latin legend *TVRIORVM* seems remarkably fragile evidence for the common notion that the status of *colonia* was removed and then restored.[127]

The inscriptional evidence for the colonial status of Tyre is not extensive but includes items of remarkable interest, complexity, and suggestiveness. The earliest is certainly a Latin inscription from Lepcis Magna in Tripolitania, the native city of Septimius Severus, itself a Phoenician/Punic city which had been Romanised in the early Empire, and had become a *colonia* under Trajan.[128] Among the many inscriptions from there honouring Severus and other members of his family, there is a statue base with the words *[[P. Septimio Getae nobilissimo Caesari]] Septimia Tyros Colonia Metropolis Phoenices et aliarum civitatium*.[129] Severus' younger son, Septimius Geta, held the title "Caesar" from A.D. 198 until he was made joint Augustus with his father and elder brother in 209. His name was erased from inscriptions, including this one, after his murder by his brother Caracalla, probably late in A.D. 211. The dedication of the original statue therefore belongs to the period A.D. 198–209.

What is significant about the inscription is that it is a conscious reflection of the historic connections between the two cities which had been created by the Phoenician colonisation of the North African coast in the archaic period, and was indeed reflected also in dedications by Lepcis, as the *Colonia Ulpia Traiana Aug(usta) Fidelis Lepcis Magna*, put up in Tyre and honouring its mother-city, before it in its turn became a *colonia*.[130] Precisely for that reason *Septimia Tyros* is not content here to be only *Colonia* and *Metropolis Phoenices* but adds *et aliarum civitatium*. It is entirely consonant with this that among the colonial coins of Tyre are ones portraying Dido supervising the foundation of Carthage. Thus, in the dedication to Geta, Tyre, made a *colonia* by a citizen of Lepcis, is recalling another and much older colonial relationship. The ancient glory of Tyre as a Phoenician city is also recalled on a colonial coin of the reign of Gallienus, on which, apart from the normal *COL TVRO METR*

127. So *BMC Phoenicia*, cxxv and 269–96, followed, e.g., by H. Ingholt, *Varia Tadmorea*, in *Palmyre: bilan et perspectives* (1976), 101, on 122, and K. Harl (n. 8), 68. Alla Stein pointed out to me that under Elagabal coins of Laodicea sometimes show *ΛΑΟΔΙΚΕΩΝ* or LAUDICEON, *BMC Syria*, 261–62.

128. For the background, see the very good account by A. R. Birley, *The African Emperor, Septimius Severus* (1988), chaps. 1–3.

129. *IRT* 437.

130. For what follows, see F. Millar, "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 209 (1983): 55, esp. 66–67 (= chapter 2 of the present volume). For more dedications from Tyre, in Latin and Greek, see J.-P. Rey-Coquais, "Une double dédicace de Lepcis Magna à Tyr," in A. Mastino, ed., *L'Africa Romana* IV (1986), 597.

there are the legends in Greek *ΕΛΛΗ*[*ΝΕΣ*] and *ΚΑΔΜΟΣ*: the type recalls the invention of the alphabet in Phoenicia, and its subsequent transmission to Greece, by showing Kadmos giving a papyrus roll to three Greeks.

As was noted above (text following n. 71), it could have been expected that if a major Roman jurist originated from any of the *coloniae* of the Near East, it would have been Berytus, or Heliopolis. But in fact the major jurist of the classical period of Roman law, Domitius Ulpianus, came from Tyre. His official career and his fame as a lawyer are duly reflected in a puzzling inscription engraved on a column found near the Roman arch of Tyre, which itself belongs to the early third century.[131] The lettering on the column may be late Roman, and it is perhaps a re-inscription of a contemporary text. If it is indeed a re-inscription, the fact that it is in Latin and concretely recalls the colonial status of the third-century city will have made it a sort of historical monument in itself. It is reported as reading:

> Domitio Ulpiano, Praefecto
> Praetorio, eminentissimo viro,
> iurisconsulto, item Praefecto
> Annonae Sacrae Urbis SEDERIA (SEBERIA?)
> FELIX AUG [. . .] PRIOR COL METROPOL
> P[A]TRIA

The city title at the end seems confused, and it could of course be that the *col(onia), metropol(is)* named is not in fact Tyre but some other city. However, Miss B. M. Levick, to whom I was very grateful for her comments on the published text and photographs, suggested that instead of *PRIOR* in line 5 we should read *TYRIOR*. *SEDERIA* in line 4 might be a personal name, *SEDEKIA(S) FELIX*, described as *AUG(ur?)* or *AUG(ustalis?)* of the *Tyrior(um) col(onia) metropol(is)*. The last three terms would then be in the same order as in the inscription from Lepcis Magna, though with the substitution of a group genitive plural for the place-name. *RIA* in the last line might be *[MEMO]RIA*. To go beyond that would be pure speculation. But Miss Levick confirmed that the lettering seems to be of the fourth century.

More securely located in its historical context is a Greek inscription of the mid-third century from Tyre, in honour of Septimius Odenathus:

131. For the Roman arch of Tyre, see M. Chéhab, "Fouilles de Tyr. La nécropole I: l'arc de triomphe," *Bull. Mus. Beyrouth* 33 (1983); for the inscription, 125–26, and pls. xiv–xv; cf. *AE* 1988, 1051. See now M. Christol, "Entre la cité et l'empereur: Ulpien, Tyr et les empereurs de la dynastie sévérienne," in F. Chausson and É. Wolff, eds., *Consuetudinis Amor: Fragments d'histoire romaine (IIe–VIe siècles) offerts à Jean-Pierre Callu* (2003), 163.

Σεπτίμ(ιον) Ὀδίναθον τὸν λαμπρότατ(ον), Σεπτιμία κολ(ωνία) Τύρος ἡ μητρόπολις. The date should be the later 240s or earlier 250s, and the person concerned is the famous Odenathus of Palmyra, already a senator but apparently not yet *ὑπατικός*.[132] A Roman citizen and senator, Odenathus came from a city which itself had been a Roman *colonia* for some decades (see below). Tyre, however, in erecting this statue as an honour from the city, has reverted to the use of Greek; and after the coinage ceases there is almost no evidence either for the public use of Latin there or for its status as a *colonia* being given emphasis, or even remembered. In the extensive writings of a major third-century writer from Tyre, Porphyry, and in the biographical information about him, this status is nowhere alluded to: to Eunapius in the later fourth century, he came from "Tyre, the foremost city of the ancient Phoenicians" (*Vit. Soph.* 455). The title *metropolis*, on the other hand, was still in dispute between Tyre and Berytus in A.D. 448–50 (*CJ* 11, 22, 1). It is clear why it should have been that title which was in dispute, since *metropolis* implied a predominance over other cities which *colonia* did not. None the less, there is an element of paradox in the appearance of this and not *colonia* in a legal document of A.D. 448–50. For exactly in those years we know that the status of Tyre as a *colonia* could still be recorded: in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, in a section relating to proceedings in 449, Tyre appears in this guise: *ἐν κολωνίᾳ Τύρῳ λαμπροτάτῃ μητροπόλει ὑπατικῇ*.[133] It had surely been long since a mere title, which reflected nothing about the social and cultural character of the city.[134]

By contrast, almost nothing is known of Septimius Severus' transformation of Sebaste in Samaria into a *colonia* beyond Ulpian's bare statement (*Dig.* 50, 15, 1, 7): *Divus quoque Severus in Sebastenam civitatem coloniam deduxit*. The latter expression is surely nominal, not implying that actual settlers were brought there. Excavations there have provided evidence of signifi-

132. For the inscription, see M. Chéhab, "Tyr a l'époque romaine," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 38 (1962): 11, on 19–20. For Septimius Odenathus, see M. Gawlikowski, "Les princes de Palmyre," *Syria* 62 (1985): 251.

133. *Acta Conc. Chalcedon. 10. Concilium Universale Chalcedonense* I, 1, ed. E. Schwartz (1933), 373.

134. I would have argued that the fact that Eusebius describes his Greek text of the letter of Maximinus to Tyre as a translation from the Latin (*HE* 9, 10, 7–11) is evidence for the public use of Latin there in A.D. 312, but for the publication by S. Mitchell, "Maximinus and the Christians in A.D. 312: A New Latin Inscription," *JRS* 78 (1988): 105, of a partial text of the same proclamation, in Latin and addressed to the Colbassenses in the province of Lycia and Pamphylia. The use of Latin is therefore not, in this context, distinctive of colonial status.

cant re-building—colonnades in the forum, a basilica, a columned street, and a stadium—none precisely dated but possibly belonging to the Severan period.[135] The known inscriptions are extremely few; but one very fragmentary one seems to confirm that, as in other *coloniae*, there were *duumviri*, described by the normal Greek equivalent, *στρατηγοί*.[136] The colonial coins at any rate give some elements of the city's title: *COL(onia) L(ucia?) SEP(timia) SEB(aste)*.[137]

That completes the list of the places within the already-established provincial area which received colonial status from Severus. What Sebaste did to earn this award is not clear; but elsewhere the connection with timely transfer to the Severan side in the civil war is explicitly or implicitly stated. Rather different considerations inevitably apply to the remarkable list of *coloniae* which made their appearance in newly conquered Mesopotamia, one of the least known and least understood areas of the ancient world.[138]

The initial creation of the new provinces of Mesopotamia and Osrhoene left as an enclave the small kingdom of Abgar with its capital Edessa, which was to become a *colonia* only under Caracalla (text to nn. 169–71 below). Here, as will be seen, there is remarkable evidence. Elsewhere we know only bare details. In the case of Nisibis at least, Cassius Dio indicates vaguely that a status (*ἀξίωμα*) was given to the city at the moment of the formation of the province; but elsewhere he elucidates this point by saying that Nisibis is now "ours" and is regarded as a colony—*νῦν μὲν ἡμετέρα ἐστὶ καὶ ἄποικος ἡμῶν νομίζεται*.[139] The coinage confirms this, though the legends are without exception Greek: the title as given on the coins expands from *ΚΟΛ ΝΕΣΙΒΙ* under Macrinus to *ΙΟΥ*(*λία*) *ΣΕΠ*(*τιμία*) *ΚΟΛΩ*(*νία*) *ΝΕΣΙΒΙ ΜΗΤ*(*ρόπολις*) under Philip.[140] Until recently, nothing more was known.

135. J. W. Crowfoot, K. M. Kenyon, and E. L. Sukenik, *The Buildings at Samaria* (1942), 35–36.

136. G. A. Reisner, C. G. Fisher, and D. G. Lyon, *Harvard Excavations at Samaria, 1908–1910* (1924), 250, no. 7, and pl. 59c: [*στρα*]*τηγούντων Ἀννίου Ῥο*[*ύφου . . .*]. See Crowfoot et al. (n. 135), 36, no. 1.

137. *BMC Palestine*, 39–40, 80–81.

138. For this region, see L. Dilleman, *Haute-Mésopotamie orientale et pays adjacents* (1962); N. Pigulevskaja, *Les villes de l'état iranien aux époques parthe et sassanide* (1963); D. Oates, *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq* (1968).

139. Dio 75, 3, 2; 36, 6, 2. See Pigulevskaja (n. 138), 49–59, and for its later history as a Roman *colonia*, C. S. Lightfoot, "Facts and Fictions: The Third Siege of Nisibis," *Historia* 37 (1988): 105.

140. *BMC Mesopotamia*, cviii–ix, 119–24.

But now one of the fascinating documents which form a Greek-Syriac archive from mid-third-century Mesopotamia refers to a document drawn up *ἐν Σεπτιμίᾳ κολωνίᾳ μητροπόλι Νεσίβει*, dating to A.D. 251.[141] Ammianus' narrative, which has so much to say of the fortunes of Nisibis in the fourth century, gives no hint that it was a *colonia*. On the other cities of Mesopotamia there is no literary evidence for this phase, and this status, at all. But the coins show that Carrhae/Harran certainly, and Reshaina and Singara quite probably, became *coloniae* under Severus. Carrhae minted alternately in Greek and Latin, the other two only in Greek.[142] All three also claimed the title *metropolis*. In the case of Carrhae, one of the papyri (no. 16) was drawn up in A.D. 250 *ἐν Αὐρηλίᾳ Κάρραις κολωνείᾳ μητροπόλει Μεσοποταμίας*. The final publication of these papyri has shed some light on a potentially fascinating phase in ancient cultural history. This evidence, fragmentary as it is, is still a reflection of the remarkable impact of Severus on the map of the Near East, or at the very least on its toponomy.

The Third Century after Septimius Severus

Where Severus had led, his successors from the same dynasty, and their successors, followed. At least some aspects of the broader background to this development are clear: firstly, with the acquisition of Mesopotamia the Near East became one of the main areas of imperial military activity, an activity stimulated in its turn by the Persian reaction of the 220s and after. Secondly, the remaining emperors of the Severan dynasty, Caracalla (A.D. 211–17), Elagabal (218–22), and Severus Alexander (222–35), descended on the maternal side from a family from Emesa (which was to be another new *colonia*; see below). Furthermore, Philip (A.D. 244–49) came from a place in the northern Hauran which was also to become a *colonia*-cum-Greek city under the name of Philippopolis.

The repeated presence of emperors in this region, and their deep involve-

141. D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III^e siècle après J.-C.) III. Actes divers et letters (*P.Euphr.* 11 à 17)," *Journal des Savants* 2000: 157–208, no. 17.

142. Carrhae/Harran: see G. F. Hill, *JRS* 6 (1916): 150–55; *BMC Mesopotamia*, lxxxvii–xciv; W. Cramer, "Harran," *RAC* (1985), cols. 634–35. (a) *ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑΣ Μ Η ΚΑΡΩΝ* (Septimius Severus); (b) COL MET ANTONINIANA AUR and COL AUR METROPOLI ANTONI (Caracalla); (c) *ΜΗΤΡ ΚΟΛ ΚΑΡΡΗΝΩΝ* (Gordian III). Reshaina: K.-O. Castelin, "The Coinage of Rhesaena in Mesopotamia," *Num. Notes and Monog.* 108 (1946): *ΣΕΠ ΚΟΛ ΡΗΣΑΙΝΗΣΙΩΝ* (Decius). Singara: Hill, *JRS* 6 (1916): 167; *BMC Mesopotamia*, cxiii; 134–36: *ΑΥΡ ΣΕΠ ΚΟΛ ΣΙΝΓΑΡΑ*.

ment in military activity there, does serve in one way to explain, or at least to provide a framework for, some of the grants of colonial status. A glance at any map which specifies the formal status of cities in this region would show a line of *coloniae* stretching along the desert frontier from Arabia to the Tigris: Petra; Bostra; Philippopolis; Damascus; Palmyra, Dura-Europos(?); Carrhae; Reshaina; Nisibis; Singara.[143] But of course any notion that that status expressed any actual Roman military character, any role of these towns as fortresses in themselves, would be quite misleading. Furthermore, there were other cities which also received this status, such as Sidon, Flavia Neapolis, or Gaza, which can have been of no significance in external military terms; it is just possible that the threat of disorder posed by the Samaritans was relevant in the case of Neapolis. By contrast, the title of *colonia* was not granted to Seleucia in Pieria, which had served at least since the later first century as the main Roman port for this region;[144] explicit inscriptional evidence from Cilicia shows supplies being delivered from there for the Roman armies in Syria in the first half of the third century,[145] surely through Seleucia. It may seem equally surprising that the status of *colonia*, though granted, as we would expect, to Antioch (see below), was not conferred on Apamea. For it was not only a major city in its own right but was repeatedly the quarters of the Legion II Parthica, on campaign with emperors far away from its base at Albanum south of Rome.[146] If military relevance had been the criterion, we might also have expected that Zeugma on the Euphrates would also have become a *colonia*.

We have to conclude that though these grants do indeed reflect the close involvement of emperors with this region in the third century, they have to be seen in each case as the expression of the vagaries of imperial favour. Those made in the reign of Caracalla and after also have the further characteristic that they accompany, or follow, that Emperor's grant of citizenship to all the inhabitants of the Empire. With that, one fundamental distinction between *coloniae* and the Greek, or semi-Greek, cities which surrounded them had been removed. In terms of citizenship there was now nothing to gain from being a *colonia*. What other rights followed, and what exactly they sig-

143. One modern map which does show this impact, though not completely, is map 27 in N. G. L. Hammond, *Atlas of the Greek and Roman World in Antiquity* (1981).

144. See the remarkable article by D. van Berchem, "Le port de Séleucie de Piérie et l'infrastructure logistique des guerres parthiques," *Bonner Jahrb.* 185 (1985): 47.

145. *AE* 1972, 626–28. See H. Halfmann, *Itinera Principum* (1986), 81.

146. See J.-C. Balty, *Apamée* (1986); "Nouvelles données sur l'armée romaine d'Orient et les raides sassanides du milieu du III^e siècle," *CRAI* (1987): 213, and "Apamea in Syria in the Second and Third Centuries A.D.," *JRS* 78 (1988): 91.

nified, depended on the terms of the grant in each case, which we do not always know.

It may not be irrelevant that Ulpian from Tyre is the only jurist of this period whom we know to have referred specifically to what moderns call "The *Constitutio Antoniniana*": *in orbe Romano qui sunt ex constitutione imperatoris Antonini cives Romani effecti sunt*. As the form of his allusion to him shows, Ulpian was writing under Caracalla, in whose reign he composed, as it seems, almost the whole of his vast corpus of work.[147] Not much of the relevant material incorporated in the *Digest* belongs more than a few years after that; and, in fact, the examples of *coloniae* given by Ulpian and Paulus stop with those of the reign of Caracalla. So, for instance, Ulpian can record the grant of colonial status and *ius Italicum* to Emesa, by Caracalla, without (at least in the quoted text) making clear that it was the home city of the Emperor's mother: *Sed et Emisenae civitati Phoenices imperator noster ius coloniae dedit iurisque Italici eam fecit*.[148] Until now nothing in the limited epigraphical material from the site has reflected the new status of the city. But an inscription with the names of Macrinus and Diadumenianus ends with *RESTITUIT COL. EMESENORUM*. It comes from the south-western limits of the city territory, bordering on that of Heliopolis.[149] The coins however are "colonial," although they are all in Greek: we find *ΕΜΙΣΩ ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑΣ* or *ΚΟΛΩΝ*(*ίας*) in 215–16 and 253, and *ΜΗΤΡΟ ΚΟΛ* (or *ΜΗΤΡΟΚΟΛ*?) *ΕΜΙΣΩΝ* under Elagabal (A.D. 218–22).[150] These coins may thus represent the earliest attested appearance of the hybrid Greek-Latin term *μητροκολωνεία*, attested a few decades later also at Palmyra (see below). Whether it was intended in this case to reflect Elagabal's own derivation from the city is not clear. Beyond that, our evidence fails us. The fourth-century literary evidence, which indicates that Emesa was then in decline, gives no hint of its colonial status.[151]

Ulpian does not refer to Caracalla's grant to Antioch. But Paulus, apparently writing after the Emperor's death, does: *Divus Antoninus Antiochenses colonos fecit salvis tributis* (*Dig*. 50, 15, 8, 5). The grant was thus the purest of

147. *Dig*. 1, 5, 17. See T. Honoré, *Ulpian* (1982), and the review article by F. Millar, "A New Approach to the Roman Jurists," *JRS* 76 (1986): 272–80 (= chapter 19 in F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*).

148. *Dig*. 50, 15, 1, 4 (Ulpian); cf. 50, 15, 8, 6 (Paulus): *Imperator noster Antoninus civitatem Emisenorum coloniam et iuris Italici fecit*.

149. See *IGLS* V: *Émésène* (1959). For the new inscription, see Ghadban (n. 122), 161.

150. *BMC Syria*, 237–41. For the relevant legends under Uranius Antoninus in A.D. 253, see H. R. Baldus, *Uranius Antoninus: Münzprägung und Geschichte* (1971), 67–68.

151. See, e.g., Libanius, *Ep*. 846; cf. H. Seyrig, "Caractères de l'histoire d'Émèse," *Syria* 36 (1959): 184.

formalities, for *salvis tributis* will mean that no exemption from either *tributum capitis* or *tributum soli* was given. The coins, beginning under Elagabal, do however reflect the new status, showing legends, all in Greek, such as *ANTIOXEΩN MHTP KOΛ*, and *ANTIOX MHTP KOΛΩNIAΣ*.[152] So limited indeed was the impact of colonial status on the culture of Antioch that Libanius, born in A.D. 314, could begin his *Autobiography* by refuting the misconceived notion that his grandfather, presumably born in the middle of the third century, had been an immigrant from Italy. The idea had arisen because the grandfather had once composed a speech in Latin: "The fact is that, although he was versed in Latin, he originated from nowhere else but here."[153] There seems to be nothing in the extensive fourth-century evidence relating to Antioch to suggest that the title was still remembered.[154] However, another of the new documents from Mesopotamia (no. 5) is a petition of A.D. 245, posted *ἐν Ἀντιοχ(είᾳ) κολ(ωνίᾳ) μητροπόλει* in the Hadrianic baths.[155]

Ulpian also records, immediately after Emesa, in his list of places with colonial status: *Est et Palmyrena civitas in provincia Phoenice, prope barbaras gentes et nationes collocata* (*Dig.* 50, 15, 1, 5). Ulpian's description of the place is very striking, for he must presumably be alluding to other unsettled peoples of the Syrian desert west of the Euphrates. As we now know, Palmyrene settlement extended a substantial distance west and north-west, and inscriptional evidence shows that their territory had common boundaries with Greek cities to the west in the Orontes valley: Apamea (probably) and Emesa certainly.[156] But the city also maintained at least outposts to the east along various routes all the way to the Euphrates itself.[157] If Ulpian were thinking of truly unsubdued Arab *gentes* and *nationes*, their territory must have lain to the north,

152. *BMC Syria*, lviii–lxiii, 151–232. See also G. Downey, "The Political Status of Roman Antioch," *Berytus* 6 (1939–40): 1, and K. Butcher, "The Colonial Coinage of Antioch-on-the-Orontes c. A.D. 218–53," *Num. Chron.* 148 (1988): 63, curiously giving relatively little attention to the colonial bronze coins as such, as opposed to imperial coins minted there.

153. J. H. W. C. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (1972), contains no allusion to colonial status.

154. Libanius, *Or.* 1, 3, trans. A. F. Norman (1965).

155. D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III^{e} siècle après J.-C.) I. Les petitions (*P.Euphr.* 1 à 5)," *Journal des Savants* (1995): 65–119.

156. See D. Schlumberger, *La Palmyrène du Nord-Ouest* (1951), and H. Seyrig, "Bornes frontières de la Palmyrène," *Syria* 20 (1939): 43.

157. M. Gawlikowski, "Palmyre et l'Euphrate," *Syria* 60 (1983): 53. Note the excellent map on 54.

between Palmyra and Chalcis, or more probably to the south, where Palmyrene territory shaded off into the true desert of the Empty Quarter. At any rate this is the aspect which Ulpian chooses to stress rather than any role in the protection of long-distance trade with the East, or any function as a military strong point in relation to Parthia. By comparison with his allusions to grants of colonial status in connection with the civil war of the 190s, he does not in this case offer any explanation of how or by whom the title came to be conferred. Nor does he make clear whether he would have thought of the *Palmyrena civitas* itself as being somewhat *barbara*.

For us, however, though we remain entirely ignorant of the date or immediate context of the grant to Palmyra, the fact that Palmyra is the only city in the entire Near East to offer a long series of public inscriptions in both Greek and a Semitic language has the further consequence that it offers the fullest documentary, and trilingual, reflection of the new status. Palmyra, like Edessa (below), offers the image of a city which was "Semitic," Greek, and Roman all at once—or, at any rate, was so for the few decades before its reconquest by Aurelian in 272.

Before the grant of colonial status, apparently under Severus or more probably Caracalla, its formal character as a community had been merely dual, Greek and Palmyrene. This character is best seen in the famous tax law of the 130s, where the city is *Ἁδριανὴ Πάλμυρα* in Greek, HDRYN' TDMR (Tadmor) in Palmyrene. It has a *βουλή* and *δῆμος* / BWL' WDMS; and office-holders with the Greek titles: *proedros* (given as the abstract noun *proedria*—PLHDRWT'); *archontes* / 'RKWNY'; a *grammateus* / GRMṬWS. These terms are all, as is obvious, merely transliterated into Palmyrene. But a further term, *dekaprōtoi*, or perhaps better *decuria* (as Teixidor suggests), is not, being translated as 'ŠRT', or "group of ten."[158]

Palmyra, as it was in the last two-thirds of the second century, could thus be seen as a place with the normal institutions of a Greek *polis*, but where those institutions were, uniquely, also reflected in a long series of public inscriptions in a Semitic language. Like many a Greek city it had acquired also a Roman imperial name, *Hadriane*; and the inscriptions also show a steady intrusion of Roman citizen names, borne by individuals. Then, from Caracalla onwards, the standard "Roman" name borne by a Palmyrene is of a strange

158. For the tax law, see *CIS* II, 3, 3913. Note also J. Teixidor, "Le tarif de Palmyre I. Un commentaire de la version palmyrénienne," *Aula Orientalis* 1 (1983): 235, and J. F. Matthews, "The Tax Law of Palmyra: Evidence for Economic History in a City of the Roman East," *JRS* 74 (1984): 157. For a discussion of the officials appearing in the tax law, see J. Teixidor, *Un port romain du désert: Palmyre* (1984), 59–60. Cf. also M. Zahrnt, "Zum Fiskalgesetz von Palmyra und zur Geschichte der Stadt in hadrianischer Zeit," *ZPE* 62 (1986): 279.

form, with two "imperial" *nomina*, that is both "Iulius" and "Aurelius." There is no way of determining whether Caracalla's universal grant of citizenship or the specific grant of the status of *colonia* to Palmyra came first; but the latter also seems to date to his reign.[159]

What is clear is that we have unambiguous evidence in the epigraphy of Palmyra for the colonial status of the city and the adoption of a colonial constitution, headed by an annual pair of *duumviri*. But, apart from a couple of milestones in Latin referring to the *col. Pal.*, or *col. Palm.*,[160] all the evidence is in Greek or Palmyrene. The colonial status of the city is therefore expressed in Palmyrene inscriptions either by transliteration (QLNY') or by using the normal Greek equivalent for the *duumvir* of a *colonia*, namely στρατηγός, transliterated as 'SṬRṬG in Palmyrene. Once, however, we will see (below) an attempt to produce in Greek a translation rather than equivalence.

Only a few of these items of evidence are dated to the decades immediately following the conferment of colonial status. The earliest is an honorific Greek inscription from the Great Colonnade, dating to A.D. 224/5, and recording Iulius Aurelius Seiba Ath[e]akabas and (Iulius Aurelius?) Titianus Athenodorus as στρατηγούντων.[161] Then there is a bilingual honorific inscription, also from a column in the Great Colonnade, dating to A.D. 242/3, and referring back to the service of Iulius Aurelius Zenobius, also called Zabdilas, on the occasion of the visit of the emperor Severus Alexander, in the early 230s.[162] In the Greek text he is referred to as στρατηγήσαντα, but in the Palmyrene more fully as 'SṬRṬGLQLNY'. Earlier he had another office, described as ἀγορανομήσαντα, surely in the context the equivalent of *aedilis*. In this case the Palmyrene version gives a translation, RB ŠWQ, "controller of the market" (souk). It is important to stress that Palmyrene was a living language, whose use was not passively dependent on Graeco-Roman conceptions and terminology. This point is confirmed by a bilingual inscription (*Inventaire* X, 115) from the Agora, in which Iulius Aurelius Malichus is honoured as a past *stratēgos* and *agoranomos* of the *colonia*. The second office is described in Palmyrene via an abstract noun, and the first probably is also:

159. For this see D. Schlumberger, "Les gentilices romains des Palmyréniens," *Bull. d'Ét. Or.* 9 (1942–43): 53, the latest detailed tabulation of the evidence; the article is also essential for the points which follow. Note also J. K. Stark, *Personal Names in Palmyrene Inscriptions* (1971).

160. (a) *CIS* II, 3, 3971: *mil. xiv col. Pal.*; (b) A. Poidebard, *La trace de Rome dans le désert de Syrie* (1934), 200: *D. N. Imp. Caes. G. Val. Diocletiano p. 1. (?) Invicto Aug. Col. Palm. mil. XXVIII.*

161. *IGR* III 1046 = J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des Inscriptions de Palmyre* III (1930), no. 5.

162. *IGR* III 1033 = *OGIS* 640 = *CIS* II.3, 3932 = *Inventaire* III, no. 22.

[B'SṬRṬGWT' DY] QLNY' WBRBNŠQWTH—"in his *stratēgia* of the *kolōneia* and in his control of the market."

From October A.D. 254 we have a bilingual inscription honouring Iulius Aurelius Ogga apparently as δυα[νδρικὸν, φιλοτείμ]ως στρατ[ηγήσαντα κα]ὶ μαρτυρηθέν[τα . . .]. If the restorations are correct, the office of *duumvir* / στρατηγός was referred to twice in different ways. Here again the Palmyrene version is not a simple transliteration or even a translation, but a slightly different text: WŠPR LHWN B'SṬRṬGWTH—"and gave them satisfaction in his *stratēgia*."[163] The remaining evidence, dating to the middle of the third century, reflects the rise of Palmyra to independent power under the leadership of Septimius Odenathus. The spread to other leading Palmyrenes of the Roman imperial *nomen* "Septimius" seems to be a result of this local leadership, and not of an earlier set of grants by Septimius Severus.[164] Thus the person to whom most of the relevant texts refer, Septimius Worod, seems to be the same as the "Aurelius Worod" attested in A.D. 258/9 as a Roman *eques* (which appears as ἱππικός / HPQ') and city councillor of Palmyra (βουλευτὴς Παλμυρηνός / BYLWṬ' TDMRY').[165] With the assertion of independent power by Palmyra, this man rose to a series of important positions. In 262 a bilingual inscription from the Great Colonnade describes him as [τὸν κράτιστ]ον ἐπίτροπ[ον Σεβαστοῦ δ]ουκηνάριον / QRṬYSṬS 'PTRP'. At this point he is more probably still in imperial service. The man putting up the inscription is a *duumvir* of the *colonia*, Iulius Aurelius Nebuzabadus, [στρατ]ηγὸς [τῆς] λαμπροτάτης κολωνείας / 'STR⟨Ṭ⟩G' DY QLNY'.[166]

Septimius Worod was also at some point *aedilis* and then *duumvir* of the *colonia*, possibly before A.D. 262. For another bilingual inscription from the Great Colonnade, whose Palmyrene text is almost entirely missing, and whose precise date is uncertain, records that he had held these offices in the past: λαμπρῶς στρατηγήσαντα καὶ ἀγορανομήσαντα τῆς αὐτῆς μητροκολωνείας. This new term μητροκολωνεία (perhaps first recorded at Emesa; see text to n. 150 above) is a perfect expression of the hybrid character of the more prominent cities in the Roman Near East in this period. The form in which it is used here, however, is a function of the fact that the inscription has already mentioned Septimius Worod's present post: [δι]κεοδότην τῆς μητ[ροκολω]νείας.[167] This expression may or may not be intended as

163. *IGR* III 1047 = *CIS* II.3, 3934 = *Inventaire* III, no. 14.

164. So Schlumberger (n. 159), 59–60.

165. *IGR* III 1036 = *OGIS* 644 = *CIS* II.3, 3937 = *Inventaire* III, no. 12. For his identity, see Schlumberger (n. 159), 60.

166. *IGR* III 1040 = CIS II.3, 3939 = *Inventaire* III, no. 10.

167. *IGR* III 1045 = *CIS* II.3, 3942 = *Inventaire* III, no. 7.

the equivalent of the Persian title *argapet* (governor), attributed to Septimius Worod on some other inscriptions of 265–67, that is, the last couple of years of the rule of Septimius Odenathus before his murder in 267.[168] That raises problems which are not strictly relevant here. But it seems to be from the same period that we have a fragmentary Greek dedication from the monumental arch, using the expression "King of Kings," and referring to a victory over the Persians, put up by two men, one of whom seems to be the same Septimius Worod with a more developed set of Roman Imperial *nomina*: *Ἰούλιος Αὐρήλιος [Σεπτί]μιος Ο[ὐ]ο[ρ]ώδης*. The two dedicants are described as *ἀμφότεροι στρα[τηγοὶ τῆς λαμ]προτάτης [κ]ολω[ν]είας*.[169]

It is not necessary here to pursue the question of the career of Septimius Worod or the precise form of government and office-holding in Palmyra during the brief period of its rise to power. Suffice to say that the city continued to designate itself as a *κολωνεία* / QLNY' or *μητροκολωνεία* (no Palmyrene equivalent is yet attested), and to have *stratēgoi* among its annual officials up to the last few years of its fully independent existence. We might have expected also that the coinage of Palmyra, as of the other *coloniae* of this region, would contribute something to our understanding of its character. But the small bronze coins of Palmyra, not certainly datable, reveal nothing about its formal designation or status.[170]

The reconquest of the city by Aurelian in 272 took place at about the moment when city coinages generally ceased, and there is no reason to imagine that minting there would have continued anyway. Inscriptions in Palmyrene might have; but in fact it seems that they ended abruptly. The city was not in fact destroyed; instead it continued, so far as we know, as a minor Greek provincial place, with a Roman garrison.[171] The few Greek inscriptions of the fourth century and after, mainly Christian epitaphs, give no hint that the city's status as a *colonia* was still recalled. But there is at least one Latin milestone of the Tetrarchic period to prove that colonial status survived the reconquest (text to n. 160 above).

168. *IGR* III 1044 = *CIS* II.3, 3940 = *Inventaire* III, no. 9: *ἐπίτροπον Σεβαστοῦ δουκηνάριον καὶ ἀργαπέτην* / 'PTRP' DQNR' W'RGBṬ'. Cf. *IGR* III 1042 = *CIS* II.3, 3941 = *Inventaire* III, no. 8 (A.D. 265); and *OGIS* 645 = *IGR* III 1043 = *CIS* II.3, 3943 = *Inventaire* III, no. 6 (A.D. 267).

169. *IGR* III 1032 = *Inventaire* III, no. 3. For restorations, see D. Schlumberger, "L'inscription d'Hérodien: remarques sur l'histoire des Princes de Palmyre," *Bull. d'Ét. Or.* 9 (1942–43): 35, and M. Gawlikowski, "Les princes de Palmyre," *Syria* 62 (1985): 251, on 255, no. 10.

170. For a survey, see W. Szaivert, "Die Münzen von Palmyra," in M. Ruprechtsberger, ed., *Palmyra, Geschichte, Kunst und Kultur der syrischen Oasenstadt* (1987), 244.

171. See F. Millar (n. 2), 156.

None the less, the evidence available shows that in the decades between the grant of colonial status and the reconquest by Aurelian, the previously "Semitic," Greek, or "Arab-Greek" city took on many "Roman" features. As regards the widespread adoption of Roman names, largely in the anomalous form "Iulius Aurelius . . . ," we cannot clearly distinguish between the effects of becoming a *colonia*, and the more general effects of the *constitutio Antoniniana*. But it is quite evident that the city adopted or received a new "colonial" constitution, with *duumviri* and *aediles*, under the Greek designation of *stratēgoi* and *agoranomoi*.

Something similar can be traced in the case of the only place in the Near East which has left a significant body of non-Jewish literary evidence in a Semitic language, namely Edessa.[172] When the new Roman provinces of Mesopotamia and Osrhoene were formed in the 190s, the small kingdom of King Abgar (IX?), with Edessa as its capital, remained as an enclave within Osrhoene (*AE* 1984, 919, A.D. 195, and 920, A.D. 205). From Abgar's reign we have the one remaining substantial fragment of the sixth-century Syriac Chronicle of Edessa, a vivid description of a flood in A.D. 201. This narrative is far from revealing the entire structure of city self-government; but it does show that the city, though dominated by a king, had its own communal officials, SPR' D'WRHY ("scribes of Orhai," i.e., Edessa), and "superintendents of the city" (ŠRYR' DMDYNT').[173]

Under Caracalla (A.D. 211–17) there came a sudden transformation. King Abgar IX (?)—or possibly his son, Abgar X (?)—was summoned by the Emperor and deposed, and the area became part of the Roman province of Osrhoene. It seems clear that the exact date of this change was A.D. 212/13. For this is implied by the famous Syriac contract of sale, found at Dura-Europos, but written in Edessa in A.D. 243, and first published in 1935.[174] This document is dated in a way which clearly points to a previous transforma-

172. For a brief sketch, see F. Millar (n. 2), 159–62.

173. Text and translation by R. Hallier, "Untersuchungen über die edessenische Chronik," *Texte und Untersuchungen* IX (1892), 84–85 (trans.), 145–46 (text). The text is also reprinted in F. Rosenthal, ed., *An Aramaic Handbook* II.1 (1967), 23–25. English translation by J. Segal, *Edessa: "The Blessed City"* (1970), 24–25.

174. P. Dura 28; revised text by J. Goldstein, "The Syriac Bill of Sale from Dura-Europos," *JNES* 25 (1906): 1, text also in Rosenthal (n. 173), 25–27 (Syriac only), and in H. J. W. Drijvers, *Old-Syriac (Edessean) Inscriptions* (1972), 54–57. Now reprinted, along with the two new Syriac parchments of the same period from the Euphrates archive (see n. 181 below), as P1 in H. J. W. Drijvers and J. F. Healey, *The Old-Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene* (1999), app. I.

tion of the city's status in 212 or 213: "in the month Iyár of the year 554 of the former reckoning [the Seleucid era] and the year 31 . . . of the freedom. . . ." "Freedom" (ḤRWRYH) here seems to refer both to the moment of provincialisation and to the apparently simultaneous elevation of Edessa to the status of *colonia*. For the city is referred to as "the renowned Antonina [*sic*] Edessa, Colonia Metropolis Aurelia Alexandria" ('NṬWNYN' 'DS' NṢYḤT' QLWNY' MTRPWLS 'WRLY' 'LKSNDRY'). *Colonia* thus makes its appearance as a loan-word, slightly differently transliterated by comparison with Aramaic and Palmyrene, in yet another Semitic language. As in various other cases, it is associated with the purely Greek status appellation of *metropolis* and with items of imperial nomenclature, of which the last will presumably have been acquired in the reign of Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–35). Here again, however, we are not presented with a mere change of name, but with a new "colonial" constitution. For the document is also dated not only "in the priesthood [BKMRWT'] of Marcus Aurelius Antiochus, Roman knight [HPWS RHMWS—i.e., *ἱππεὺς Ῥωμαῖος*], son of Belšu," but also by the two *stratēgoi*—"in the *stratēgia* [B'SṬRṬGWT'] of Marcus Aurelius Abgar, Roman knight, son of Ma'nu, grandson of Agga, and of Abgar, son of Hafsai, grandson of Bar-Kmr." On the verso one of the two *stratēgoi*/*duumviri*, Aurelius Abgar, appears as a witness, writing his own signature both in Syriac—'WRLS 'BGR SṬRṬG' ŠHD (witness)—and in Greek: *Ἄβγαρος* or *Ἄβγαρ ὁ στρ(ατηγός)*.[175] That he could and did write both is a very significant fact.

The document shows throughout the impact of Roman citizenship and Roman nomenclature. All the persons involved, both male and female, have Roman names, with Semitic, or in one case Greek, *cognomina*. Almost the same applies to the seller, Lucius(?) Aurelius Tiro, son of Bar B'šmn, ḤRNY'—"Harranian," that is, from Carrhae/Harran, also now a Roman *colonia* (text to n. 142 above). But we also seem to find traces of the previous system of city government of Edessa. For there is still a scribe (SPR') in whose hand the main body of the text is written, and who concludes it with the words "I Marcus Aurelius Belšu, son of Moqimu, the scribe, have written this document" (MRQWS 'WRLYWS BLŠW BR MQYMW SPR' KTBT ŠTR' HN'). Immediately above, another official, perhaps the supervisor of the archives, writes in Greek: *Αὐρ. Μάννος ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ τοῦ πολειτικοῦ μ(α?)ρ(τυρῶ?)*. There follows a seal with the image of Gordian III (A.D. 238–44). The use of Greek, however, may serve to introduce one of the most anomalous features in the history of Edessa as a Roman *colonia*. There appear to be no inscriptions reflecting this status. But, as elsewhere, there are

175. Goldstein (n. 174) denies that there is any visible trace of the final *τ* and *ρ*.

coins, which, like those of most other Mesopotamian *coloniae*, are entirely in Greek. The legends come in a variety of forms: *ΚΟΛΩ*(*νία*) *Μ*(*ητρόπολις*?) *Α*(*ὐ*?)*Ρ*(*ηλία*?) or *ΜΑΡ*(*κία*?) *ΕΔΕΣΣΑ*; *ΜΑΡ ΑΥ ΑΝΤ*(*ωνινιανὴ*) *ΚΟΛ ΕΔΕΣΣΑ*; *ΜΗΤ ΚΟΛ ΕΔΕΣΣΑ*, and so forth; the colonial coins begin under Elagabal, or possibly Caracalla, and continue under Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–35) and Gordian III (A.D. 238–44).[176] But then, still under Gordian III, we find coins with the Emperor on the obverse, and on the reverse one figure seated on a podium and, before him, another standing figure, wearing a high tiara and offering him a statuette. The identifications are not left open to doubt; they are the Emperor himself and "King Abgar": *ΑΥΤΟΚ ΓΟΡΔΙΑΝΟΣ*, *ΑΒΓΑΡΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ*. Other coins with Gordian on the obverse show King Abgar, riding a horse, on the reverse, or a bust of him wearing a tiara.[177] The coins thus offer a remarkable confirmation of the view reached by von Gutschmid in 1887 in studying the entries relating to kings of Edessa which are scattered through the eighth-century Syriac World-Chronicle, whose author should properly be identified as Pseudo-Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē.[178] The text of the chronicle is now available in a modern edition, but one only usable by fluent readers of Syriac.[179] In spite of the excellence of von Gutschmid's work, it should be stressed that the list as established by him, and often subsequently quoted, was the result of extensive correction and adjustment; in particular, the chronicle plainly places each of the later kings a couple of decades too early. The work needs to be completely re-done in the light of subsequent documentary evidence. In the mean time no reliance whatsoever can be placed on the numbering, or exact dates or identities of the kings, as derived from this chronicle.

It is however clear that the list, however confused in the course of transmission, does embody reflections of a genuine succession of kings known from contemporary evidence. Von Gutschmid's attempt to make sense of it was in itself entirely justified. He concluded, as regards the third century, that in A.D. 179–214 there fell the thirty-five-year reign of a King Abgar, to whom he gave the number IX, and whose full name was L. Aelius Septimius Abgar. Without all the evidence being necessary here, this is essentially cor-

176. *BMC Mesopotamia*, xciv–cvii, 91–118.

177. See H. Gesche, "Kaiser Gordian mit dem Pfeil in Edessa," *Jahrb. f. Num. u. Geldg.* 19 (1969): 47.

178. A. von Gutschmid, "Untersuchungen über die Geschichte des Königreichs Osroene," *Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de Saint Pétersbourg*, 7th ser., XXXV (1887).

179. J.-B. Chabot, ed., "Incerti Auctoris Chronicon Pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum," *Corpus Scriptorum Orientalium*, *Scriptores Syri* III.1 I–II (1927–33). For a very useful study of this work, see W. Witakowski, *The Syriac Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahrē* (1987).

rect; this is the "King Abgar" ruling when there was the flood of A.D. 201, recorded by the *Chronicle of Edessa* (text to n. 173 above); the *ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΑΒΓΑΡΟΣ* whom the coins show to have been a contemporary of Severus; and the "Septimius Abgar" whose *regnum* is attested in *AE* 1984, 920, of A.D. 205 (text to n. 173 above).

Von Gutschmid concluded that there followed a joint reign of Abgar IX and his son Severus Abgar (X), and then the nominal rule as "Titularkönig" of Ma'nu son of Abgar, in A.D. 216–42, followed finally by the restoration of a genuine king, whom he thought was called Abgar (XI) Phrahates, son of Ma'nu.

The headings of the two extensive Syriac documents from the important new archive from Mesopotamia show both that there is a reflection of a genuine sequence of events in all this, but also that it now requires radical readjustment.[180] Firstly, the document designated *P.Euphr.Syr*. A is dated 18.12.240,[181] in the Seleucid year 552, year 3 of Gordian and year 2 of 'LYWS SPṬMYWS 'BGR MLK' BR M'NW PSGRYB' BR 'BGR MLK'; that is "year 2 of Aelius Septimius Abgar, son of Ma'nu, crown prince, son of Abgar the King." As Teixidor suggested, this allows the reconstruction of a much simplified succession: firstly "the" Abgar, the contemporary of Severus (with the possibility that it was he rather than a son called Abgar who was deposed by Caracalla, as recorded by Dio 77, 12, 1^a–1^2); then Abgar's son Ma'nu, left with the status of "crown prince" (PSGRB') for the twenty-six years 212/13–239,[182] then the restoration as king of Ma'nu's son, Aelius Septimius Abgar. His second year coincided with Seleucid year 552, autumn 240–autumn 241, so his first coincided with autumn 239–autumn 240. It is thus he who appears on coins along with Gordian III.

At that point the title *colonia*, which had been in regular use on the coins of Edessa (text to n. 176 above) was dropped, for the name and title of the city

180. J. Teixidor, "Les derniers rois d'Edesse d'après deux nouveaux documents syriaques," *ZPE* 76 (1989): 219. I was extremely grateful to J. Teixidor and D. Feissel for a preliminary text of the archive, and for permission to quote the "colonial" titles which appear there. For my suggested reconstruction and dating of the entries in the Chronicle, see Millar (n. 2), app. 3.

181. J. Teixidor, "Deux documents syriaques du III^e siècle après J.-C., provenant du Moyen Euphrate," *CRAI* (1990): 147; cf. S. Brock, "Some New Syriac Documents from the Third Century AD," *Aram* 3.1–2 (1991): 259; B. Aggoula, "Studia Aramaica III," *Syria* 69 (1992): 391. This text is reprinted as P2 in Drijvers and J. F. Healey (n. 174), app. I.

182. It is worth noting that a Ma'nu with the title PSGRYB' is attested on a Syriac inscription from the citadel of Edessa; see H. J. W. Drijvers, *Old-Syriac (Edessean) Inscriptions* (1972), no. 27. See Segal (n. 173), 19 and pl. 29a.

itself appears in the papyrus as "Orhai the fortified city which is the mother of all the cities of Mesopotamia" ('RHY B'RS MDYNT' DYT' 'M' DMDYNT' KLHYN DBYT NHRYN).

The restoration thus certainly occurred a couple of years earlier than had previously been supposed. It did not last long. As we saw, the Syriac deed of sale from Dura-Europos shows that Edessa was again a *colonia* in A.D. 243. But in fact colonial status had reappeared, and the king had disappeared, even earlier. For the Syriac document which Teixidor designated B is dated 1.9.242, year 5 of Gordian, Seleucid year 553, and year 30 "of the liberation of the renowned Edessa Antonina Colonia Metropolis Aurelia Alexandria" (DḤRWR' D'NTWNYN' 'DYS' NṢYḤT' QLWNY' MTRPWLS 'WRLY' 'LKSNDRY')—therefore exactly as in the deed of sale of the following year.[183]

Inevitably therefore, the results of modern discussions of this tangled sequence of events now require radical revision.[184] Some of the "colonial" coins of Edessa under Gordian III may indeed date to after the restoration, and coins of the reign of Decius (A.D. 249–51) also have *ΚΟΛ ΕΔΕΣΣΑ*. Some time not long after that coining will have ceased, along with that of all the other cities of the Greek East.

The colonial constitution of the city continued, however. The Syriac martyr act of Shmona and Guria, relating events which seem to have occurred in A.D. 308, gives a dating (para. 1) by the *stratēgia* (B'SṬRṬYGWT') of Abba and Abgar; while the closely related martyr act of Habib the deacon, describing comparable events which perhaps date to A.D. 310, gives a similar local dating (para. 1) as "in the *stratēgia* [B'SṬRṬGWT'] of Julius and Barak." But this narrative also, like the record of the flood of A.D. 201, represents "superintendents" of the city (ŠRYR' DMDYNT', para. 3), who play a role in the persecution, reporting Habib's activities to "the governor" (HGMWN'—*ἡγεμών*, i.e., *praeses*).[185] The standard Greek equivalent term for *duumvir*, *stra-*

183. See Teixidor, "Un document syriaque de fermage de 242 ap. J.-C.," *Semitica* 41–42 (1993): 195–208; cf. Brock and Aggoula (n. 181). This document is reprinted as P3 in Drijvers and J. F. Healey (n. 174), app. I. Note the reconstruction of the dating mentioned in n. 180.

184. See, e.g., R. Duval, *Histoire d'Édesse* (1892), 69–70; A. R. Bellinger and C. B. Welles, "A Third-Century Contract of Sale from Edessa in Osrhoene," *YCS* 5 (1935): 143–44; E. Kirsten, "Edessa," *RAC* IV (1959), 552–53, on cols. 556–57. For an excellent discussion of the varied accounts (and names and dates of the kings) in the chronicles, and their relation to the Syriac contract, see H. J. W. Drijvers, "Hatra, Palmyra and Edessa," *ANRW* II.8 (1977), 881–82.

185. For these texts, and translation, see F. C. Burkitt, *Euphemia and the Goth* (1913), 78–79.

tēgos, had thus taken firm root in the political structure of the city. But there does not seem to be any later Syriac literature relating to Edessa which shows that same structure continuing.

That ends the list of the exotic *coloniae* of Mesopotamia; none, incidentally, not even Nisibis, is referred to as a *colonia* by either Ulpian or Paulus. For Ulpian, Palmyra, "situated near barbarous *gentes* and *nationes*," was perhaps exotic enough. His set of examples of *coloniae* (*Dig*. 50, 15, 1) was written under Caracalla (A.D. 211–17); as for Paulus, the transmitted text of his enumeration (50, 15, 8) seems ambiguous as to whether Caracalla was still alive at the moment of writing or not. At any rate neither makes any reference to the colonial foundations of the reign of Elagabal (A.D. 218–22), or later, a final phase of which even less is known, and which may be summed up briefly here. In very few cases is there any intelligible historical context for the grant of colonial status. But since, of course, this status was already widespread in the region, further grants may not require much explanation. Moreover, with the 220s we are approaching even closer to the period when city minting and then the "epigraphic habit," never so developed here as for instance in North Africa or western Asia Minor, came wholly or largely to an end.

It seems that it was under Elagabal that Sidon became a *colonia*. Perhaps surprisingly, its colonial coinage is consistently in Latin: AUR PIA SID COL MET under Elagabal; COL AU(r) P(ia) METR SID, sometimes with AETERNU(m) BENEFI(cium), or COL AUR PIA MET SID under Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–35).[186] There are no inscriptions to attest the new status. But by a fortunate accident there is a papyrus of A.D. 267, in which a pancratiast records that he had been victorious in the "sacred iselastic oecumenical periporphyran isolympian contest" *ἐν* [*κο*]*λωνίᾳ Σιδονίων πόλει*.[187] The nature of the contest is entirely Greek; but none the less its Roman status is part of the formal titulature of the city. It is also interesting to see this and other evidence for the continuation of city athletic (and theatrical) festivals in the period of the crisis of the Empire. But no further evidence is available to illuminate the life of Sidon as a *colonia*.

It was also under Elagabal that the little-known city of Arca or Caesarea ad Libanum, situated at the northern end of the Mount Lebanon chain, was granted the rank of *colonia*. In this case the explanation seems simple, for it

186. *BMC Phoenicia*, lxxxvii–cxvi, 139–99. See N. Jidejian, *Sidon through the Ages* (1971). Dr. Howgego suggested to me that both legends and style may be due to the influence of Berytus.

187. *Sel. Pap*. II, no. 306.

was the native city of the Emperor's uncle by marriage, Gessius Marcianus, the husband of his aunt, Iulia Mammaea.[188] Consequently the city was also the native city of her son, Elagabal's cousin and successor, Severus Alexander.[189] But it was in fact early in Elagabal's reign, soon after his coup d'état in Syria in 218, that the elevation took place.[190] The evidence in this case is provided solely by the city coinage, which begins under Antoninus Pius with the designation of the city as *ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΛΙΒΑΝΩ* or *ΚΑΙΣΑΡΕΙΑΣ ΛΙΒΑΝΟΥ*. Then in the Seleucid year 530, A.D. 218/19, coins appear with the Latin legend COL CESARIA LIBANI; under Severus Alexander as Caesar, A.D. 221/2, there is the variant COL CESA ITUR. Why the historical connections of the city with the Itureans of Mount Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon should have been recalled at this point is not known.

It seems similarly to have been under Elagabal that Petra received the rank of *colonia*.[191] Nothing whatsoever is known of the circumstances, but we find on its coins from the reign of Elagabal the Latin legend COLONIA PETRA, sometimes also written PETLA COLONI(A). Here again, therefore, the formerly Nabatean city, whose formal character had been for a century that of a Greek city, with the title *Ἁδριανὴ Πέτρα Μητρόπολις*, was transformed into a Roman *colonia*. By luck, given the very slight harvest of Greek and Latin inscriptions from Petra, there is at least one which confirms the new status. A statue base from the *temenos* of the Qasr Bint Far'un is inscribed in Greek with the name of Valerius Iulianus, *procurator* of two emperors, honoured by the *mētropolis* and *mētrokolōnia*, and is dated by the two *stratēgoi* / *duumviri* in office: *Οὐαλέριον Ἰουλιανὸν τὸν / κράτιστον ἐπίτροπον τῶν / Σεββ. ἡ μητρόπολις καὶ μητροκολ(ωνία) / τὸν ἑαυτῆς εὐεργέτην / διὰ* [. . .] *ρ. Θεοδώρου καὶ Ἀριστείδου στρατηγῶν*.[192]

The hybrid Latin-Greek word *mētrokolōnia* / *μητροκολωνία* thus appears once again (cf. text to nn. 167–69 above). The inscription, modest as it is, is

188. *PIR*², G 171; see G. W. Bowersock, "Senators from the Near East," in S. Panciera, ed., *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* II (1982), 651, on 665. I am not convinced, however, that *Dig.* 1, 9, 12, shows that he had been adlected to the Senate, as against Dio 78, 30, 3, who says merely that he had held procuratorships.

189. So Aurelius Victor, *Caes.* 24, 1: *Aurelio Alexandro, Syriae orto, cui duplex Caesarea et Arce nomen est.* Cf. *HA*, *Sev. Alex.* 1, 1; 13, 5.

190. *BMC Phoenicia*, lxxi–iii, 108–10; see H. Seyrig, "Une monnaie de Césarée du Liban," *Syria* 36 (1959): 39. *Non vidi* J. Starcky, *Arca du Liban, Cahiers de l'Oronte* 10 (1971–72): 103.

191. See S. Ben-Dor, "Petra Colonia," *Berytus* 9 (1948): 41; A. Spijkerman, *Coins of the Decapolis and Provincia Arabia* (1978), 218–41; G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (1983), 121.

192. Published by J. Starcky and C. M. Bennett in *Ann. Dept. Ant. Jordan* 12–13 (1967–68): 45, no. xii, and in *Syria* 45 (1968): 60, no. xiii. See now in Sartre's *IGLS* XXI.4, no. 48.

also sufficient to confirm that the normal restructuring of the city constitution took place here also.[193] But in this as in almost all other respects the subsequent history and nature of Petra as a Roman-Greek-Nabatean city in the late Roman period remains a mystery. But note now the title appearing in *P. Petra* 1 (23.5.537), lines 4–5: *ἐν Αὐγουστοκολωνίᾳ [Ἀ]ντωνιανῇ ἐ[π]ι[σήμ[ῳ καὶ] εὐ[. .]ε[ῖ μ]η[τρὶ] κ[ολωνιῶν] / Ἁδριανῇ Πέτρᾳ μητροπόλει τῆς Τρίτης Παλαιστίνης Σαλουτ[αρίας]*.[194]

In the next reign, that of Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–35), the other major city of the province of Arabia, Bostra (known since Trajan's acquisition of Arabia as *Νέα Τραιανὴ Βόστρα*), followed suit, and gained the title *colonia*. Again, we have no historical context for the grant. Apart from a single Greek inscription which records a dedication on behalf of Gordian III by *ἡ κολωνία*, dated to the 134th year of the province (A.D. 239),[195] the sole explicit evidence is provided by the city's coins, which have the legends COLONIA BOSTRA, N(ea) TR(aiana) A(lexandriana), COL BOSTRA and COL METROPOLIS BOSTRA / BOSTRON / BOSTRENORUM.[196] However the inscriptions of third- and even fourth-century Bostra do reflect the existence of local offices with Latin titles. An undated Latin inscription (*IGLS* XIII 9029) mentions *quaestoribus*; but, more important, one of 323/6 is dated *ἐπὶ κουαιστορείας* (*IGLS* XIII 9112), while two men are described as *ἀπὸ φλάμενος* (*IGLS* XIII 9008–9). These texts are undated, but surely derive from the third century. However there is nothing else in the attested titulature of city officials in this period to reflect its colonial status, not even the appearance of the term *στρατηγός*.[197] We can be sure that the normal language of Bostra, even for legal purposes, continued to be Greek: the fact is explicitly attested in a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus (*P. Oxy.* 3054) recording the sale of a slave at "Bostra in Syria" in A.D. 265, *κατὰ δίπλωμα Ἑλληνικόν*. Yet the document makes curiously insistent use of what seem to

193. Starcky and Bennett (n. 192), on pp. 47 and 62, refer to the two *stratēgoi* mentioned (as 'SRTGY') in a Nabatean inscription from Hegra / Medain Saleh, and suggest that these are in fact the annual *stratēgoi* / *duumviri* of Petra. The inscription is *CIS* II.1, 235, re-published by Jaussen and Savignac, *Mission archéologique en Arabie* I (1909), 213, no. 57. Unfortunately the idea that this is a dating formula ("in the days of"—'L YMY) is removed by the different reading in J. Cantineau. *Le nabatéen* II (1930), 37, no. viii.

194. *The Petra Papyri* I, ed. J. Frösén, A. Arjava, and M. Lentinen (2002).

195. *IGLS* XIII 9057.

196. See Spijkerman (n. 191), 66–89; A. Kindler, *The Coinage of Bostra* (1983); M. Sartre, *Bostra des origines à l'Islam* (1985), 76.

197. For the city's institutions as reflected in the epigraphy of the region, see Sartre (n. 196), 76–77.

be Roman tribal names: φυλῆς Ἀν[. . .]—Aniensis? [. . .]ϵργια—Sergia? and φυλῆς Ῥωμ . . ας—Romilia?[198] As elsewhere, we are confronted with complex mutual influences whose overall effect we cannot claim to understand.

Nothing suggests that further grants of colonial status followed in the reign of Gordian III (A.D. 238–44), in spite of the Persian campaign on which he met his death. But several such grants seem to have come in the reign of his successor Philip (A.D. 244–49). In some instances the evidence is minimal. All that we know of Damascus as a *colonia* is the legend COL DAMAS METR on coins from Philip's reign to that of Gallienus.[199] Other cases are clearer. One is Flavia Neapolis (present-day Nablus) in Samaria, which had been made a city by Vespasian. Under Philip the new colonial status is reflected in a remarkable variety of different Latin coin legends: COL SERG NEAPOL; COL IUL NEAPOLI; NEAPOLIS COLON; NEAPOLI NEOCORO COL. Then, under Gallus and Volusianus, there is COLON(IA) NEAPOLI(S).[200] In this case it so happens that a rabbinic source, a commentary on Lamentations, seems to provide a reflection of the new rank: "After Jerusalem was destroyed Caesarea became a metropolis [MṬRWPWLYN], Antipatris a city [MDYNH] and Neapolis a *colonia* [QLWNYY']."[201] The Midrash on Lamentations is thought to date to the fifth century. If so, it is interesting, and consonant with the other evidence, that Caesarea's status as a *metropolis* should be more visible than that as *colonia*; but the more recent grant, of colonial status to Neapolis still attracts attention.

198. See H. M. Cotton, W. Cockle, and F. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): nos. 171–72. On *P. Bostra* 1, see now J. Gascou, "Unités administratives locales et fonctionnaires romains. Les données des nouveaux papyrus du Moyen Euphrate et d'Arabie," and H. M. Cotton, "Appendix: Administrative Divisions in Arabia," in W. Eck, ed., *Lokale Autonomie und römische Ordnungsmacht in den kaiserzeitlichen Provinzen vom 1.–3. Jh.* (1999), 71–73 and 90–91, respectively.

199. *BMC Syria*, lxxiv–v, 286–88.

200. *BMC Palestine*, xxv–xxxiv, 45–74. See K. W. Harl, "The Coinage of Neapolis in Samaria," *Am. Num. Soc. Mus. Notes* 29 (1984): 61.

201. *Midrash Ekha Rabbati* 1.5 (ed. Buber. 1899, 65). Translated by A. Cohen in *Midrash Rahbah, Lamentations*, ed. H. Freedman and M. Simon (1951), 100, where the references to Antipatris and Neapolis in Buber's text are rejected, without however any reason being given. I was grateful to Aharon Oppenheimer for confirmation that Buber's text is acceptable. Antipatris had been founded by Herod the Great—see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II (1979), 167—but a remarkable confirmation of the historicity of the context is offered by coins of Antipatris from the reign of Caracalla or Elagabal, probably the latter, with the legend *M AYP ANT ANTIΠATPIΣ*. See Y. Meshorer, *The City Coins of Eretz-Israel and the Decapolis* (1985), no. 150.

In parallel with that there is of course the much better-known case of Philippopolis in the northern Hauran, founded as a city with the rank of *colonia* by its most famous citizen, Philip "the Arab." The place will perhaps have been a substantial village before its elevation, though nothing is in fact known of its earlier name (probably, but not certainly, related to its present name, Shahba), of its character as an urban conglomeration, or of its degree of self-government; it may even be (as Segal, n. 206 below, suggests) that the new city was built on a virgin site. This lack of information is unfortunate but also surprising, for the physical remains of the substantial villages, and occasional towns (Canatha and Soueida/Dionysias), of this region, with their rich crop of inscriptions illustrating village self-government, allied with intensive study in recent decades, have made this one of the best-known regions of the Roman Near East.[202]

The Emperor, M. Iulius Philippus, born in about A.D. 204, was the son of a local notable of equestrian rank, Iulius Marinus, both of whose sons embarked on prominent equestrian careers.[203] The notion that we are concerned with a family of low-class brigands (*Epit. de Caes.* 28, 4) can safely be dismissed; more probably they were quite substantial landowners. The refoundation of the place as a city with the rank of *colonia* had a considerable impact both locally, in the wider Syrian region, and in the historical tradition on Philip. In the town itself we find the building, in the very distinctive black basalt of the region, of a shrine dedicated to the now deified father of the Emperor, Marinus: *θεὸς Μαρίνος* or *Divus Marinus*.[204] The theatre of Philippopolis, also in black basalt, and situated close to the sanctuary, seems to have been built at the same time.[205] So, probably, was the main street, along with the walls and gates.[206] The constitution of the new city is not illustrated

202. See, of course, the well-known article by G. M. Harper, "Village Administration in the Roman Province of Syria," *YCS* 1 (1928): 105; H. I. MacAdam, "Epigraphy and Village Life in Southern Syria in the Roman and Early Byzantine Periods," *Berytus* 31 (1983): 103, and *Studies in the History of the Roman Province of Arabia: The Northern Sector* (1986); and, above all, J.-M. Dentzer, ed., *Le Hauran* I.1–2 (1985–86).

203. *PIR*^{2} I 407, 461, 488. For the family and the place, see now G. Amer and M. Gawlikowski, "Le sanctuaire impérial de Philippopolis," *Dam. Mitt.* 2 (1985): 1.

204. Le Bas-Waddington, nos. 2075–76 = *IGR* IV 1199–1200; *AE* 1928, 153 (reference only): given in full by Amer and Gawlikowski (n. 203), 12, *Divo Marino eqq. ala Celerum Philippianae*.

205. See P. Coupel and E. Frézouls, *Le théatre de Philippopolis en Arabie* (1956).

206. There has been no comprehensive analysis of these buildings since the accounts by H. C. Butter, *AAES* II: *Architecture and Other Arts* (1903), 376–96, and by R. E. Brünnow and A. von Domaszewski, *Die Provincia Arabia* III (1909), 143–79. For a survey, necessarily

by any documentary evidence; but a Greek inscription contains a dedication for the safety of Philip and his son by three *bouleutai*, *προεδρίᾳ Μαρρίνου, ἔτους πρώτου τῆς πόλεως*.[207] Coins of the reign of Philip (but not after) have the Greek legend *ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ ΚΟΛΩΝΙΑΣ*.[208] It was very likely of this new foundation that someone at Sakkaia (later Maximianopolis, now Shaqqa), a few miles away, was thinking when he put up a verse epigram ending with the words *εὐτυχίτω ἡ κολωνία*—"Good luck to the *colonia*."[209]

Rather further afield, the author of the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle, written a few years later, probably in Emesa, noticed the adornment of this city and of one other new *colonia* in the vicinity, Bostra, but not specifically their new formal status: "Now bedeck yourselves, cities of the Arabs, with temples and stadiums, agoras and streets, glorious wealth, and statues of gold and silver and ivory . . . Bostra and Philippopolis."[210] The new foundation also achieved a mention in Aurelius Victor's brief account of the reign of Philip, written over a century later: *conditoque apud Arabiam Philippopoli oppido* (*Caes*. 28, 1). Here too, as so often, and almost universally in the fourth century, the specific status of *colonia* has dropped out of sight.

With that the list of *coloniae* in the Near East is almost complete: the very uncertain cases of Ascalon, Gadara, and Gerasa, none of which produced any colonial coins, need not be discussed in detail.[211] There remains, firstly, Dura-

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based on published material, see A. Segal, "Town Planning and Architecture in Provincia Arabia: The Cities along the Via Traiana Nova in the 1st–3rd Centuries C.E.," *BAR Int. Ser.* 419 (1988): 75–76.

207. Le Bas-Waddington, no. 2072 = *IGR* III 1196.

208. *BMC Arabia*, xli–ii, 42–43; Spijkerman (n. 191), 258–61.

209. *IGR* III 1189. Note the inscription of A.D. 238 recording that someone had dedicated a statue of the Tyche of Sakkaia, *τύχην Μεγάλην Σακκαίας τῇ κυρίᾳ πατρίδι* (*AE* 1984, 921 *bis*).

210. *Orac. Sib*. 13, 64–73. See A. T. Olmstead, "The Mid-Third Century of the Christian Era," *Class. Philol*. 37 (1942): 241, on 259–62; Baldus (n. 150), 252–55.

211. (a) Ascalon. The evidence consists solely of a papyrus of A.D. 359, *BGU*, no. 316 = L. Mitteis and U. Wilcken, *Chrestomathie*, no. 271, 1.26: *ἐν κολωνίᾳ Ἀσκ[άλωνι?] τῇ πιστῇ καὶ ἐλευθέρᾳ*. See Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* I, 105–8. (b) Gadara. The sole evidence is *CIL* III 181 = 6697 (Byblos): *col. Valen. Gadara*. See *ZDPV* 55 (1932): 76–80, and Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 132–36. (c) Gerasa. There are two inscriptions from the city which refer, or may refer, to colonial status, but not certainly that of Gerasa itself. C. H. Kraeling, *Gerasa City of the Decapolis* (1938), 437, no. 179: *Colonia Aur. Antoniniana*; 442,

Europos, which also never minted its own coins, but where a papyrus contract of divorce of A.D. 254, almost the latest document from the history of the town, gives it a title which possibly reflects both its foundation in the early Hellenistic period and a new Roman status: *ἐν κολωνείᾳ Εὐρω̣π̣[αίων Σελεύκου] Νεικά̣τ̣ο̣ρο̣ς̣ [τ]ῇ ἱερᾷ [καὶ] ἀ̣[σύλ]ῳ καὶ ᾳ̣[ὐ]τ̣ονόμ[ῳ]*. The title is enough to give substance to a couple of other references, one with the loan-word *κόλωνες*, in the plural, among the inscriptions in Dura, suggesting that the title had been conferred here too, by which emperor we do not know.[212]

The same three Greek titles, "sacred, inviolate, and autonomous," are used to describe the city of Gaza in an inscription from Portus near Rome, dating to the reign of Gordian III.[213] It seems clear that the place was not yet a *colonia*. But a lead weight from Gaza itself shows that it too did become one at some point: *κολωνίας Γάζης, ἐπὶ Ἡρῴδου Διοφάντου*.[214] It is perhaps paradoxical that this relatively obscure place should not only have gained such an honour, but should also have been the location of quite extensive narratives relating to the fourth and fifth centuries, which duly confirm that it then had a colonial constitution. The first is the brilliantly evocative *Vita of Hilarion* by Jerome, covering the first half of the fourth century.[215] Being in Latin, it can of course deploy the correct terminology. We thus find that the chief official of the city is a *Gazensis duumvir* (ch. 20). Confirmation is offered by Sozomenus' *Ecclesiastical History*, which speaks of *στρατηγοί* (5, 3); and perhaps by Mark the Deacon's *Life of the Bishop Porphyry*, which speaks of "the two leading men," *τῶν δύο πρωτευόντων*, named Timotheos and Epiphanios, along with a *dēmekdikos* and some *eirēnarchoi* (25), in office in the last couple of years of the century. However, two chapters later (27) he speaks of

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no. 191: *στρατηγὸν κα[ὶ πά]τρωνα τῆς κ[ολω]νείας*. See Kraeling, 57. Later excavations do not seem to have produced any further inscriptions bearing on this topic.

212. P. Dura 32, 11.4–5. Cf. F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Dura-Europos* (1926), 393, no. 35: *πιάκλα [εἰ]σὶ κολ(ώνων?)*; 404, no. 50: *κόλωνες, βουλευταὶ καὶ εἱερεῖς*; and *Excavations at Dura-Europos* III (1932), 51, no. 149 (statue base for Julia Domna): *Αὐρηλ(ιανῶν) Ἀντωνινιανῶν Εὐρωπαίων ἡ βουλή*; V (1934), 23, no. 396: *κολωνιοδ[ουρανός?]*.

213. *IGR* I 387. See C. A. M. Glucker, "The City of Gaza in the Roman and Byzantine Periods," *BAR Int. Ser.* 327 (1987): 119.

214. *IGR* III 1212; Glucker (n. 213), 148, no. 42.

215. Migne, *PL* XXXIII, cols. 29–54. English translation in R. J. Deferrari, ed., *Early Christian Biographies* (Fathers of the Church XV, 1952), 239–80; text with introduction, Italian translation, and notes in C. Mohrmann, ed., *Vite dei Santi* IV (1975). See also Glucker (n. 213), 45; H. Grégoire and M.-A. Kugener, eds., *Marc le Diacre, Vie de Porphyre* (1930).

three *prōteuontes*; if this is not a simple error, it could mean the two *duumviri* (?) and the *ecdicus*, or *defensor*.

Neither Jerome nor Mark the Deacon explicitly refers to the city as a *colonia*; if their evidence suggests that the city still had a colonial constitution, it is only implicitly. So far as is known, the city had never minted any colonial coins; and if any *coloniae* were still benefitting from remission of direct taxation, Mark's narrative categorically implies (41) that Gaza was not among them.[216]

Conclusion

It is not entirely unsuitable that this survey of the *coloniae* of the Roman Near East should end on so uncertain a note. From one point of view the discussion might serve to emphasise how fragile, limited, and disparate is the evidence for the physical nature, social composition, self-government, and collective images of cities in this region under Roman rule. From another, however, it might serve to suggest how considerable the changes brought about by Roman rule were. Even if we ignore fundamental issues of social history such as the extension of cultivation, the growth of substantial villages in many regions, and the efflorescence of places calling themselves towns, Roman rule profoundly affected the personal and collective identities by which people lived. Quite outside the list of places which became *coloniae*, Latin place-names, from "Julias," "Livias," and "Tiberias" onwards, were scattered liberally across the map of the Near East, while Latin personal names, and then the Roman *tria nomina*, found their way into common use, not only in Greek but in Semitic languages.

From the strictly linguistic point of view it is also revealing that the Near East was a zone in which Latin, Greek, and Semitic languages operated in a complex set of interrelationships. So *colonia* and *colonus* could become *κολωνία*, or *κολωνεία*, and *κόλων*, and these in their turn QLNY', or QLWNY', and QWLWN. In the form of a loan-word *colonia* and its cognates found their way into several different Semitic languages: Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, Palmyrene, and Syriac. Since Nabatean remained in use until the fourth century, it is not impossible that the word might one day turn up here too.

The main wave of grants of colonial status, beginning under Septimius Severus, immediately preceded, or accompanied, Caracalla's grant of Roman

216. The historical status of the entire narrative is, however, a matter of controversy, not least in this section. See also Glucker (n. 213), 65, n. 110.

citizenship for all the inhabitants of the Empire. The status thus automatically lost one aspect of its significance, to be absorbed into the wider range of Romanising influences in the Greek East, a mutual interaction which was to give birth to the "Roman" Empire ruled from Constantinople. Whether taxation privileges were maintained is obscure, as is the real significance and real applicability of *ius Italicum*, as a right conferring on the possession of land in the provinces the status of full ownership in Roman law. Any discussion of this right ought at least to start from the fact that one of the two fullest accounts of its distribution (both very brief) comes from Domitius Ulpianus, a native of a pseudo-*colonia*, Tyre, of the Severan period, and the other from his contemporary Paulus. That in itself is a puzzle, for if there is one item of social and cultural history which stands out from this survey of the *coloniae*, it is that it was primarily the earliest of them, Berytus, with Heliopolis as part of its territory, later turned into an independent *colonia*, which created a real and enduring island of *Romanitas* and of the use of Latin in the Near East. (But recently published inscriptions show that the same was true of Caesarea, at any rate until the end of the third century.) It was a function of that "Roman" character that Berytus gave birth to law schools (not a law school) which continued to attract students until the Byzantine period. It was the city as a whole which fostered the study of Roman law. Thus Eunapius (*VS* 490) describes Anatolius, a native of the place who rose to the praetorian prefecture in the 350s, as "rising to the summit of what is called legal learning, as having as his native city Berytus, which is regarded as the mother of such studies."

Even Berytus, however, founded in and absorbing an existing Graeco-Phoenician city, had from the beginning minted coins like a Greek city; in continuing to do so it expressed its identity as a city in a way unlike all except one of the Roman *coloniae* of the Latin-speaking part of the Empire (see n. 4 above). The evidence, however scattered and inadequate, shows that the later *coloniae*, which nearly all minted coins, might do so either in Latin or in Greek. It shows equally clearly that *colonia*, or κολωνία, competed as a status designation with the specifically Greek term *metropolis*.

Thus to all appearances—and appearances are all that the evidence allows us to grasp—the *coloniae* of this region, Berytus apart, were gradually reabsorbed into their environment, as Greek cities among others, with only the structure of their magistracies, and occasional reappearances of the word κολωνία in their formal titulature to single them out. For Jerome, recording Paula's pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the 380s, of all the cities (Tyre, Sidon, Caesarea, Aelia itself) which were or had been *coloniae*, only Berytus still earned the title *Romana colonia* (*Ep*. 108, 8). Very little, so far as we know,

remained of that brief but very distinctive phase, occupying roughly the first half of the third century, which momentarily gave a very precise meaning to the notion of "Graeco-Roman" civilisation as represented by cities, and also saw both the largest number of individual city mints (under Septimius Severus for the Greek East as a whole, and under Elagabal for the Syro-Palestinian region) and the greatest overall volume of production of city coinages. But in the third quarter of the century all such minting ceased.[217] Thereafter our quite extensive evidence for the life of this region and its cities provides no more than the most slight and erratic evidence to suggest that the status of *colonia* was still remembered. Only Berytus, the earliest and most profoundly Romanised of these colonial foundations, continued to play its historic role as the source of Roman law for the early Byzantine world.

217. See A. Johnston, "Greek Imperial Statistics: A Commentary," *RN* 26 (1984) and Harl (n. 8).

CHAPTER NINE

Latin in the Epigraphy of the Roman Near East[*]

Introduction

In approaching the complex problems of the role of Latin in the epigraphy of the Roman Near East, it seems appropriate to begin with by far the most famous of all Roman inscriptions, the *titulus* on the Cross. It is, of course, not typical of what we normally refer to as "inscriptions," since it was written—presumably painted—on a non-permanent material, wood, and was thereby designed for the information of the public over only a short space of time, no more than a few hours. But it did share with all inscriptions, whether temporary or permanent, the intended function of making information available to whoever could read it, or have it read to them. It has moreover an exceptional importance for students of epigraphy, because it alone, of all the millions of inscriptions put up in the Roman Empire, is the subject of four separate reports in literary sources. It also serves as an object warning, as regards the effective transfer of information: for not one of the four reports coincides exactly with any of the others; and only one of them records even the elementary fact that the inscription was put up in three languages. The texts of the relevant passages from the four Gospels are as follows:

> *καὶ ἦν ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ τῆς αἰτίας αὐτοῦ ἐπιγεγραμμένη, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.* (Mk. 15:26)
>
> *καὶ ἐπέθηκαν ἐπάνω τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ τὴν αἰτίαν αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένην, οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.* (Mt. 27:37)
>
> *ἦν δὲ καὶ ἐπιγραφὴ ἐπ' αὐτῷ, ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων οὗτος.* (Lk. 23:38)

[*] First published in H. Solin, O. Salomies, and U.-M. Liertz, eds., *Acta Colloquii Epigraphici Latini. Helsinki 3–6 Sept. 1991* (Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 104, 1995), 403–19.

ἔγραψε δὲ καὶ τίτλον ὁ Πιλάτος, καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ. ἦν δὲ γεγραμμένον, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τίτλον πολλοὶ ἀνέγνωσαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς πόλεως, ὅπου ἐσταυρώθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς. καὶ ἦν γεγραμμένον Ἑβραϊστί, Ῥωμαϊστί, Ἑλληνιστί. (Jn. 19:19–20)

It will be seen at a glance that by far the most detailed and informative of the four accounts is that of John. That of itself will of course not prove that this narrative should be preferred to the Synoptic versions, from which it differs in almost every particular, including above all the relation of the Crucifixion to Passover. But in fact there are many reasons for believing that the "historical Jesus" is best reached through John's Gospel.[1]

All four reports of what the inscription said are transmitted to us in Greek, by authors whose origin (whether Jewish or gentile), current place of residence (whether in Judaea or elsewhere), or date of writing are all entirely matters of speculation. But the fact that they did write in Greek is of course a perfectly accurate reflection of the centrality of Greek as the primary language of communication throughout the Roman Near East. Given that role, it also functioned as a medium of transmission between the various Semitic languages used in the region on the one hand and Latin on the other. This role is perfectly exemplified, for instance, in a perishable medium, in the census return of A.D. 127 from the archive of Babatha, in which both Babatha's subscription, originally in Aramaic, and that of the Roman *praefectus*, originally in Latin, appear in Greek translation.[2]

In the three Synoptic Gospels, however, the coexistence of Latin, Greek, and a Semitic language, as symbolised on the Cross, has dropped out of view, to leave only three different reports in Greek of what the inscription said. It is not only in that respect that John's report is more complex and detailed. It is also he alone who records, whether veridically or not, that Jesus' origin in Nazareth was indicated; and only he who reflects the currency of transliterated Latin official terms in everyday provincial Greek, in calling the inscription a τίτλος, or *titulus*: in this sense a notice written on any form of material, for public display.

1. See for the best discussion of the issues, E. Bickerman, "Utilitas Crucis," *RHR* 112 (1935): 169 (= *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* III [1986], 82); and for the significance of John's Gospel, F. Millar, "Reflections on the Trials of Jesus," in P. R. Davies and R. T. White, eds., *A Tribute to Geza Vermes: Essays on Jewish and Christian Literature and History* (1990), 355 (= chapter 7 of the present volume), and R. Lane Fox, *The Unauthorised Version: Truth and Fiction in the Bible* (1991), 383ff.

2. N. Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar-Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (1989), no. 16.

More significant, however, is John's report that the *titulus* was written in three languages, *Ἑβραϊστί*, *Ῥωμαϊστί*, *Ἑλληνιστί*. The latter two are of course straightforward, namely Latin and Greek. But it remains systematically uncertain what is meant by *Ἑβραϊστί*. The problem arises because, while it is certain that both Hebrew and Aramaic were in use among the Jewish population of Judaea, there was no clear and distinctive terminology for distinguishing between them. *Ἑβραϊστί* or *κατὰ τὴν τῶν Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον* can be used by Josephus and New Testament writers to describe words which are in fact in Aramaic.[3] As regards the various dialects of Aramaic used by gentiles in the Near East, there is a fair degree of consistency among observers writing in Greek or Latin. They speak of *Suroi* (or sometimes *Assurioi*) in Greek and of *Syri* in Latin, and of people speaking *suristi* or "in the Syrian language." We would not expect from them a detailed knowledge of dialects, or of regional variations. But it is significant for their global view of what we call "Aramaic" that outsiders applied terms cognate with "Syrian" to local dialects in use throughout the entire region; thus to Pliny the Elder, Hierapolis in northern Syria "is called Mabog by the *Syri*"; Josephus records that Palmyra was still called "Thadamora" among the *Suroi*; and Eusebius says that Petra was called "Rekem" among the *Assurioi*.[4]

But although the Aramaic used by Jews in Judaea was also just another dialect of the Aramaic which outsiders thought of as "the language of the Syrians," and was distinct from Hebrew, it does not seem that, within a Jewish context, there was a clear distinction of nomenclature between the two. Indeed it is clear that there was not. So when either Paul in Jerusalem, or Josephus outside the walls of the city during the siege of A.D. 70, is described as making a speech to the people *τῇ Ἑβραΐδι διαλέκτῳ*, or *ἑβραΐζων*, we cannot be sure whether Hebrew or Aramaic is meant. Either is in fact possible.[5] But if either could be used as a spoken language, *a fortiori* either might have been used, along with Latin and Greek, in the formal context of the *titulus* on the Cross.

In the Near East, therefore, Latin entered into a more complex set of linguistic relationships than we can trace in any other area of the Empire. By and

3. For the most detailed survey, see still Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 20–28. For the confusion, see esp. 25, n. 118. See also H. M. Cotton's new edition of the famous lines of *P. Yadin* 52, lines 11–15: *ἐγράφη δ[ὲ] Ἑληνεστὶ διὰ τ[ὸ] [ἡ]μᾶς μὴ εὑρηκ[έ]ναι Ἑβραεστὶ ἐ[γγρ]άψασθαι*, in Y. Yadin, J. C. Greenfield, A. Yardeni, and B. Levine, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters* II: *Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabataean Documents* (2002), 351–62.

4. Pliny, *NH* 5, 81; Josephus, *Ant.* 8, 154; Eusebius, *Onom.*, ed. Klosterman, 142, 8.

5. *Acts* 21:40; Josephus, *BJ* 6, 96.

large, since both Latin (in certain specific contexts) and—much more generally—Greek functioned as the languages of the dominant power, we are dealing with the transmission of Latin and Greek words and concepts into Semitic languages rather than the other way round. The material need not be surveyed again here.[6] But it is relevant to note that transliterations of Latin military and administrative terms into Semitic languages were generally derived not directly from Latin but indirectly through their Hellenised forms. So *legio* becomes λεγεών in the New Testament (Mk. 5:9) and (see below) LGYWN' in Palmyrene, while *centurio* appears as QṬRYWN' in Palmyrene or QNṬRYN' in Nabataean.[7] More significantly, a large range of Roman official terms reappear in Semitic texts not as transliterated via Greek, but as transliterations of the corresponding Greek translations. A number of examples will be given below.

The reverse process, the appearance of Semitic terms in Greek and Latin, is far less common and is indeed largely confined to names: of places, persons, and deities. Without using Semitic names in Latin and Greek transliteration it would have been quite impossible for either society or government to have functioned in this region at all. In that limited sense Semitic terminology pervades the entire written material—literary texts, perishable documents, and inscriptions—from the Roman Near East; detailed examples do not need to be given. But it should perhaps be stressed that while the re-naming of cities with Greek, or Latino-Greek names ("Maximianopolis") was a process which was continuous from Alexander into the late Empire, the overwhelming mass of villages retained their Semitic names; and a significant proportion of these names have been retained continuously until today.[8]

In two specific contexts, however, Latin could be deployed in inscriptions in a way which was not significantly different from that in which it functioned in other regions of the Empire. One was the Latin "island" formed

6. D. Kennedy and D. Riley, *Rome's Desert Frontier from the Air* (1990). Note also J. Wagner, *Die Römer an Euphrat und Tigris* (Antike Welt, Sondernummer, 1985); *Dizionario Epigrafico* IV, 43 (1984), s.v. "Limes": 1324–76/4 (Mesopotamia, Osrhoene, Syria, Judaea, Arabia); A. Lewin, "Dall'Eufrate al Mar Rosso: Diocleziano, l'esercito e i confini tardo-antichi," *Athenaeum* 78 (1990): 141. See M. G. Angeli Bertinelli, *Nomenclatura pubblica e sacra di Roma nelle epigrafi semitiche* (1970); Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* II, 52ff. (Greek and Latin loanwords in Hebrew and Aramaic); M. G. Angeli Bertinelli, "I Semiti e Roma: appunti di una lettura di fonti semitiche," in *Serta Historia Antiqua* I (1986), 145.

7. See Angeli Bertinelli, *Nomenclatura*, s.v. "centurio" (Palmyrene); *CIS* II, no. 215 (Nabataean).

8. See, e.g., E. Frézouls, "La toponymie de l'Orient syrien et l'apport des éléments macédoniens," in *La toponymie antique. Actes du colloque de Strasbourg 1975* (1978), 219.

under Augustus by the foundation of the *colonia* of Berytus, with its extensive territory stretching over Mount Lebanon into the northern Bekaa valley. Here the public use of Latin was to survive the creation by Severus of a second *colonia* in this eastern sector, Heliopolis. But elsewhere, when the creation of nominal *coloniae* became more frequent from the 190s onwards, Latin, in these "colonial" contexts, entered into complex relations with Greek, and in some cases with Semitic languages.[9]

The other context for the relatively "pure" use of Latin was of course the military one. Most notable of all are the Latin inscriptions of the stone-built forts of the "desert frontier," some still standing today, which line the edge of the steppe from Mesopotamia to the Red Sea, accompanied by milestones, above all those of the Via Nova in Arabia.[10] The imperialist overtones of the milestones of Trajan's road are matched above all by the triumphant message of the inscriptions from the Tetrarchic period. This appears most clearly in the inscription from the "camp of Diocletian" at Palmyra:[11]

> [Reparato]res orbi sui et propagatores generis humani dd.nn. Diocletianus [et Maximianus] invictis]simi impp. et Constantius et Maximianus nobb. Caess. castra feliciter condiderunt [curam age]nte Sossiano Hieroclete v(ir) p(erfectissimus), praess. provinciae, d(evoto) n(umini) m(aiestati)q(ue) eorum.

But everywhere, in whatever terms military inscriptions proclaimed the dominance of the emperors, individual soldiers lived in complex social, economic, religious, and linguistic relations with the multi-lingual society around them. This fact is very evident in the archive of Babatha (n. 2 above), as it is also in the quite remarkable bilingual inscription of a Roman veteran from the bank of the Tigris: the veteran (*οὐετρανός*), "Antonios Domittianos," made his dedication to Zeus in Greek and Aramaic.[12]

It is displayed also, even more clearly, in the archive of Greek and Syriac documents of the third century from the middle Euphrates.[13] The region

9. F. Millar, "The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations," in H. Solin and M. Kajava, eds., *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies* (Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 91, 1990), 7, and esp. 10–23, 32–34, for the Latin "island" of Berytus and Heliopolis (= chapter 8 of the present volume).

10. For the "desert frontier," see (if not very detailed as to inscriptions) the immensely evocative book by Kennedy and Riley (n. 6).

11. J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* VI, no. 2.

12. J. F. Healey and C. S. Lightfoot, "A Roman Veteran on the Tigris," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 17 (1991): 1.

13. See D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen

to which these priceless new texts primarily refer, the area of the Euphrates around and upstream from its confluence with the Chabur, overlaps in a very significant way with that covered in the very rich documentary material from Dura-Europos. This material too provides ample evidence of the co-existence of Latin, Greek, and Semitic languages, and of the social, cultural, economic, and religious role of soldiers of the Roman army within a civilian environment. It is only necessary to mention, by way of illustration, the Greek deed of sale of A.D. 227, with signatures of witnesses in Latin, in which a veteran of Cohors III Augusta Thracum purchases an orchard on the banks of the Chabur. This papyrus, like the other documents on papyrus and parchment, was included in a masterly volume of the *Final Reports*, published in 1959.[14] But, in the context of a volume on Latin epigraphy, it is necessary to stress that the inscriptions of Dura, a unique combination of Latin, Greek, Aramaic, Syriac, Safaitic, Palmyrene, and Middle Persian, have never been revised or collected since their initial publication by Franz Cumont and by others in the various reports of the excavations between the two world wars.[15] Nor does it seem that there are any plans to carry out this work. Yet these texts, including graffiti and painted inscriptions, represent a unique historical and linguistic resource which it remains very difficult to use; moreover they urgently require systematic revision, because many of the, often hazardous, identifications of the buildings found by the excavators depend on the relations of inscription and structure. Without a proper collection and re-assessment of the inscriptions a critical evaluation of what we really know of Dura as a city cannot be undertaken.[16]

Euphrate (III^e s. après J.-C.) I. Les petitions (P.Euphr. 1 à 5)," *JS* (1995): 65–119; "II. Les actes de ventes-achat (P.Euphr. 6 à 10)," *JS* (1997): 3–57; "III. Actes divers et letters (P.Euphr. 11 à 17)," *JS* (2000): 157–208.

14. C. Bradford Welles, R. O. Fink, and J. Frank Gilliam, eds., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report* V.1: *The Parchments and Papyri* (1959); the deed of sale of A.D. 227 is no. 26.

15. For the inscriptions of Dura, see F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (1922–23) (1926), 349–454; *Excavations at Dura-Europos, Preliminary Reports* I–IX (1929–52); Mesnil du Buisson, *Inventaire des inscriptions palmyréniennes de Doura-Europos* (1939); R. N. Frye, J. F. Gilliam, H. Ingholt, and C. B. Welles, "Inscriptions from Dura-Europos," *YCS* 14 (1955): 127. Note also C. B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of A. C. Johnson* (1951), 251, and G. D. Kilpatrick, "Dura-Europos: The Parchments and Papyri," *GRBS* 5 (1964): 215 (the best available survey of linguistic co-existence there).

16. See F. Millar, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule," in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Parther-*

Along with all these other aspects, the study of the role of Latin in Dura, in public inscriptions and on perishable documents, and of Latin vocabulary transliterated into other languages, remains to be undertaken. The situation is at least better, however, in the case of the other major site in the Near East for the study of linguistic co-existence and the influence of Latin: Palmyra.

Here at least there are systematic, if inevitably not complete, collections of the inscriptions, as well as a brief but extremely penetrating modern account.[17] The history of Palmyra cannot be reviewed in any detail here. But three aspects will be considered, as a way of illustrating the complex questions which arise in relation to the role of publicly inscribed Latin in the Near East: the significance of Palmyra as a new, and rapidly evolving, city; the nature of the rather small corpus of inscriptions from Palmyra which are trilingual, in Latin, Greek, and Palmyrene; and the way in which attention to linguistic interplay between these three languages, as shown on contemporary inscriptions, can serve to correct mistaken views about the structure of power in Palmyra in the third century.

Firstly, we need to recall the broad features of the history of Palmyra which need to be borne in mind if the nature of its epigraphic record is to be understood.[18] As a city, Palmyra was not ancient, but came into existence in the first century B.C.; only very slight evidence suggests the presence there of tombs, and perhaps the original temple of Allat, in the second century B.C. But although there had been no "city" of Palmyra in the Seleucid period, dating by the Seleucid era, beginning in autumn 312 B.C., is universal in its inscriptions. As a political community it evolved steadily towards the model of the Greek city, acquiring a *boulē* and *dēmos* in the second half of the first century A.D., along with a normal set of Greek city offices. In the course of the first century it also came firmly within the orbit of the Roman province of Syria. But, unlike all other Greek cities in the Roman East, its people continued to use a Semitic language, or dialect of Aramaic, Palmyrene, both in communal, official inscriptions and in epitaphs. In the latter, Palmyrene often appears alone, but in public inscriptions characteristically in a parallel text with Greek. So far as our evidence goes, *as an inscribed language*, Palmy-

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reich und seine Zeugnisse (Historia-Einzelschrift 122, 1998), 473–92 (= chapter 16 of the present volume).

17. *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* II.3 (1926); J. Cantineau et al., *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* I–XII (1939–65). See J. Starcky and M. Gawlikowski, *Palmyre*[2] (1985).

18. This section sums up a more detailed treatment in *The Roman Near East (31 B.C.–A.D. 337)* (1993), 159–70.

rene was also a novelty as used in the imperial period: the earliest known text, from the temple of Bel, dates to 44 B.C. The "epigraphic habit" here was a borrowing from the wider Greek world, but in a unique bilingual form.

The notion that under Hadrian Palmyra became a free city is a mistake, although it was visited by the Emperor and acquired the Greek name "Hadrianic Palmyra" (HDRYN' TDMR in Palmyrene), and it is under this name that it appears in the famous bilingual customs law of the Seleucid year 448, A.D. 137.[19] In the early third century, however, under Septimius Severus or more probably Caracalla, it was granted the status of *colonia*, and it was as a Roman *colonia* that it played its remarkable, but very brief, role in the troubled events of the 260s and 270s.

It might have been expected that in the "colonial" period Latin, always rare but attested on inscriptions from Palmyra from the reign of Tiberius onwards, would become much more common. In fact it does not, and indeed, paradoxically, there are no Latin inscriptions of the *colonia*. Instead there is an intensification of a linguistic phenomenon already visible in the "Greek-city" period: the Palmyrene vocabulary for Graeco-Roman city institutions was almost entirely constructed by transliteration (for instance, in the customs law, DGM', BWL' WDMS, GRMṬWS, and NMWS'—*nomos*, the law itself). Attempts at translation are relatively rare, for instance RB ŠWQ—"controller of the market," *agaronomos*. But this instance in fact comes from the colonial period, when the new institutions of the *colonia*, clearly marked in the inscriptions, are expressed characteristically in Greek or in Palmyrene transliteration of Greek. *Colonia* indeed is expressed as QLNY'; but *duumvir* as *στρατηγός*, and hence in transliteration as 'SṬRṬG.[20] As in the Babatha archive (text to n. 2 above), Greek plays a dominant role in mediating between Latin and a Semitic language.

Against that background, we may now turn to the quite brief corpus of trilingual inscriptions from Palmyra, in which Latin, Greek, and Palmyrene not merely influence each other but appear in formal parallel texts. In fact, to my knowledge, there are only six such texts, dating between the 50s and the 170s. As mentioned above, none is known from the colonial period. The texts will be set out in chronological order.

19. For the best treatment, see J. F. Matthews, "The Tax Law of Palmyra: Evidence for Economic History in a City of the Roman East," *JRS* 74 (1984): 157.

20. See in more detail Millar (n. 9), 42–46.

Trilingual Inscriptions from Pre-colonial Palmyra

1. M. Rodinson, "Une inscription trilingue de Palmyre," *Syria* 27 (1950): 137 (from just south of the agora).

   A.D. 52

   Haeranes Bonne Rabbeli
   f. Palmirenus phyles Mithenon
   sibi et suis fecit.

   Ἔτους γξτ΄ μηνὸς Ξανδικοῦ
   Αἰράνης Βωνναίου τοῦ Ῥαββήλου
   Παλμυρηνὸς φυλῆς Μειθηνῶν ἑαυτῷ
   καὶ Βωννῆ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Βααλθηγα μητρὶ
   αὐτοῦ εὐνοίας ἕνεκεν καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις αὐτοῦ

   BYRḤ NYSN ŠNT CCCLXIII QBR' DNH' DY
   ḤYRN BR BWN' BR RB'L BR BWN' BR 'TNTN BR
   TYMY TDMRY' DY MN PḤD BNY MYT' DY BN' 'L
   BWN' 'BWHY W'L B'LTG' BRT BLŠWRY DY MN
   PḤD BNY GDYBWL 'MH WLH WLBNWHY LYQRHWN

   Translation of Palmyrene:

   In the month of Nisan of the year 363, this is the tomb of Hairan, son of Bonne, son of Rabbel, son of Bonne, son of Athenatan, son of Taimai, a Tadmorean from the tribe of the sons of Mita, which he built for Bonne his father and for Baalthega, daughter of Bolsari from the tribe of the sons of Gadibol, his mother, for himself and for his sons, in their honour.

2. M. Gawlikowski, "Deux publicains et leur tombeau," *Syria* 75 (1998): 145 (from the western entrance to the Valley of the Tombs).

   A.D. 56/7

   [C. Virius Alcimus et]
   [T. Stat]ilius Her[mes]
   [fec]erunt sibi et suis

   Ἔτους ηξτ΄
   [Γαίο]ς Ὑίριος Ἀλκίμος
   [καὶ Τίτο]ς Στατίλιος Ἕρμης
   [ἐποί]ησαν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἰδιοῖς

GYS WYRS ʿLQMS WṬYṬS W'SṬṬLYS H[RMS]
BNW NPŠH WMʿRTH ʿLM LHN WLBNYHWN LYQ[RHWN]
BŠNT 368

Translation of Palmyrene:

Gaius Virius Alcimus and Titus Statilius Hermes have constructed this funerary monument and hypogaeum, for ever, for themselves and their sons in their honour, year 368.

3. *CIS* II, no. 4235 = *IGR* III, no. 1539 = J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre* VIII, no. 57 (found in the Temple of Bel, but evidently deriving from a tomb).

A.D. 58

[L.S]pedius Chrysanthus
[vi]vos fecit sibi et suis

Λούκιος Σπέδιος Χρύσανθο[ς]
ζῶν ἐποίησεν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τ[οῖς]
ἰδ[ίοι]ς ἔτους θξτ΄ μηνὸς Γ[ορ]π[ιαίου].

BYRḤ 'LWL ŠNT CCCLXIX [BN]H [LWQY]WS
'SPDY[S] KRYSTWS MKS' BḤYWHY [QBR' DNH]
LH WLBNWH' WLBNY BYTH LY[Q]RH[WN]

Translation of Palmyrene:

In the month of Elul of the year 369, Lucius Spedius Christos, tax collector, during his life built this tomb for himself and his sons and the sons of his house, in their honour.

4. J. Cantineau, "Tadmorea," *Syria* 14 (1933): 169, on 174ff. (a column from the temple of Bel).

A.D. 74

Bu[le et civi]tas Palmyrenorum Hairanem
Bo[nnae f.] qui et Rabbilum
pium [et phi]lopatrin

Ἡ [βουλ]ὴ καὶ ὁ [δῆμος] Αἰράνην Βωννέο[υς]
[τὸν καὶ Ῥ]άββηλο[ν]
κ[οσμητ]ὴν εὐσε[βῆ] καὶ [φιλ]όπατριν, τειμῆς χάριν
[ἔ]τους ἐπτ΄ μηνὸς Ξανδικοῦ.

BWL' WDMS LH[Y]RN BR BWN[' DY MTQR' RB'L]
MṢBTH BBNYBY [']L[HY'] WRḤYM
MDYNTH 'QYMW LH ṢLM' DNH LYQRH
BYRḤ N[YS]N [ŠNT] [CCC]LXXXV

Translation of Palmyrene:

The *boule* and *demos*, to Hairan, son of Bonne, who is (also) called Rabbel, decorator of the buildings of the gods(?), and lover of his city, erected to him this statue, to honour him, in the month Nisan of the year 385.

5. H. Seyrig, "Inscriptions grecques de l'agora de Palmyre," *Syria* 22 (1941): 223, no. 25; Cantineau, *Inventaire* X, no. 113 (from just to the south of the agora).

A.D. 174

L. Antonio Callis-
strato manc. IIII merc.
Galenus actor

Λ. Ἀντωνίῳ Καλ-
λιστράτῳ τεταρτώ-
νῃ Γαληνὸς πραγ-
ματευτὴ[*s*] *ἴδιο*[*s*].

ṢLM' DNH DY (L)WQYS 'NṬWNYS
QLSṬRṬS DY RB' ' DY
'QYM LH LYQRH GLNWS PR-
GMṬT' DYDH BYRḤ '(B?) ŠNT
CCCCLXXXV.

Translation of Palmyrene:

This is the statue of Lucius Antonius Callistratus "of the quarter," which Galenus, *pragmateutes*, his agent, erected to him, to honour him, in the month Ab(?) of the year 485.

6. Kh. Al-As'ad and J. Teixidor, "Quatres inscriptions palmyréniennes inédites," *Syria* 62 (1985): 271, no. 9 (find-spot not recorded; Museum of Palmyra).

A.D. 176

[ἔκτι]σεν Λούκιος
[. . .]λῳου τοῦ ζπυ΄

[. . du]arum gub
[. . pecun]ia sua
[Polli]one II et Apro II cos.

QBY' 'LN TR[Y']
'NṬNYS Q[LSṬRṬS]

The issues raised by these six inscriptions are of remarkable interest and complexity. In the earliest (1 and 2), although the Latin comes first and the Greek second, the Palmyrene text is considerably fuller, and the others are summaries of it. Inscription 1 certainly comes from a tomb, and in it the prominent Palmyrene Hairan (who also reappears in 4) lists his forefathers for five generations; the earliest, Taimai, ought thus to have been born at some time around the end of the second century B.C., that is the earliest period to which the evidence relating to Palmyra takes us back. These male ancestors evidently belonged to the "tribe" of the "sons of Mita," while Hairan's mother came from the "sons of Gadibol"; the nature of these groupings is a complex question which will not be pursued here.[21] From the epigraphic point of view it is more significant that the Greek supplies a translation for TDMRY' DY MN PḤD BNY MYT', namely *Παλμυρηνὸς φυλῆς Μειθηνῶν*, and that this translation is then transliterated, without alteration of grammar, into the Latin version. This is the earliest attested use of Latin by a native Palmyrene, and might be taken as a piece of exhibitionism by a prominent citizen in the early period of Roman domination.

Inscription 3 is also from a tomb. But in this case it is quite uncertain whether it reflects a degree of attachment to Graeco-Roman culture by a native Palmyrene or the presence of an immigrant Greek who is already in possession of the Roman citizenship. If he is a Palmyrene, these names are unique there,[22] and he also claims no place in Palmyrene society, nor, in the Greek and Latin texts, any specific position. But in the slightly fuller Palmyrene text he records a position described as MKS', which in the customs law appears in the Palmyrene text as the equivalent of "whoever has contracted for the collection [of the tolls]" in the Greek text. It does not however follow that he is a Roman *publicanus*. The contractors mentioned in the customs law are collecting tolls for the city, even if under the terms of regulations

21. See D. Schlumberger, "Les quatre tribus de Palmyre," *Syria* 47 (1971): 121, and cf. M. Gawlikowski, *Le temple palmyrénien* (1973), chap. 2.

22. See J. K. Starck, *Personal Names in Palmyrene Inscriptions* (1971).

made under Roman supervision. It is equally possible that this tax collector is an immigrant Greek, with Roman citizenship, who is acting for the city. One may note as a parallel from the second century a *bouleutēs* from Antioch, also a Roman citizen, who was τεταρτώνης (collector of a 25 percent tax), evidently at Palmyra. He is recorded on a bilingual inscription of A.D. 161.[23]

In either case the significance of inscription 3 as a sign of the way in which Palmyra was being rapidly drawn into the orbit of Graeco-Roman culture is far outweighed by that of 4, which represents the earliest appearance of the *boulē* and *dēmos* of Palmyra. Unlike the earlier three, this is the base of a statue (ṢLM'—"image"), erected to the same Hairan as in inscription 1 by the (as it seems) newly formed, Greek-style deliberative bodies of the city. Given difficulties with the text, whether he is being credited with contributing to the building, or decoration, of temples remains uncertain; but the notion of being *philopatris* (RḤYM MDYNTH) is present in all these texts. It is of some significance that the Palmyrene equivalent is a translation, whereas that in the Latin—*[phi]lopatrin*—is a transliteration (not, alas, to be found in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*). By contrast, the standard transliteration BWL' WDMS now takes its established place in Palmyrene public inscriptions, while the Latin equivalent is an awkward mixture of transliteration and translation, "bu[le et civi]tas Palmyrenorum." As so often, both versions are derivatives of the Greek.

Inscriptions 5 and 6 evidently concern the same man, L. Antonius Callistratus. The fact that he is a Roman citizen of Greek origin, given the dating of the inscription in the 170s, should cause no surprise. He too, like Spedius Chrysanthus, is a tax collector, concerned with a 25 percent tax, apparently on goods being traded or transported. This role is described in markedly different ways in the three languages: τεταρτώνης in Greek, and DY RB' in Palmyrene (as in the inscription of 161 mentioned above); both thus give the level of the tax but do not indicate its object (and again the Palmyrene can hardly have been intelligible without the Greek). In Latin we have "*manceps* of the fourth part[?] of the *mercatura*, or *mercatus* or *mercedes*[?]." Again it is clear that the concepts πραγματευτής in Greek and *actor* in Latin are independent equivalents; but the Greek goes into Palmyrene in transliteration, PRGMṬT'—but is helped out by a Palmyrene gloss, DYDH, literally "who [is at] his hand."

Inscription 6 is conspicuously "Roman," in giving, as well as the Seleucid year in Greek, a dating in Latin by the consuls of 176, a feature which would not reappear in the inscriptions of Palmyra as a *colonia*. But it is also

23. J. Cantineau, *Inventaire* X, no. 29. τεταρτώνης here is translated as DY RBʿ'.

striking in that, fragmentary as it is, it seems to exhibit the transliteration of a Palmyrene word into Latin. For GUB in the Latin text seems to be a transliteration of GBY', possibly meaning "craters," which may have been recorded as offerings. With this fragmentary text, in which for the first time the Latin appears between the Greek and the Palmyrene, instead of first, the Latin epigraphy of the city of Palmyra comes to an end, a few decades before it rose to colonial status and acquired a new constitution. The only exceptions are a military inscription of A.D. 206, and then, after the collapse of Palmyrene power in the 270s, inscriptions of the Tetrarchic period. But it was in the context of the colonial period that one family at least rose to Roman senatorial rank.

The Position of Septimius Odenathus and His Son Septimius Hairanes in the 250s

The rest of this paper will not be concerned with the dramatic events of the 260s and 270s which briefly brought a prominent Palmyrene, Septimius Odenathus, and then his widow Zenobia and his son Septimius Vabalathus, to a leading role in the history of the Roman Near East.[24] Instead it builds on the re-interpretation of the presumed earlier history of the dynasty offered in a very important article by Michal Gawlikowski, published in 1985.[25] Here Gawlikowski showed that we have no evidence from before the 250s for members of the family occupying a leading role in Palmyra (or, still less, as representing a line of local dynasts). What we have instead, in the 250s, is a picture of an important local family, of Roman senatorial status, whose position is reflected in a series of honorific inscriptions in Greek and Palmyrene. Roman concepts, and individual Latin words, are everywhere present. But the Latin language, as such, is not. None the less, a study of the role of Latin terminology in the Greek and Palmyrene public vocabulary of the *colonia* in this period can add considerably to the force of Gawlikowski's argument. The claim to imperial power by the family was to be a product of later circumstances, and was made by a senatorial family from within the context of the Roman *colonia* from which they came. What that context was is the subject of this section. The texts need again to be set out in order. It should be stressed that these are the earliest dated inscriptions put up to honour any

24. On the 260s and 270s, see F. Millar, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria," *JRS* 61 (1971): 1–17 (= chapter 10 of the present volume).

25. M. Gawlikowski, "Les princes de Palmyre," *Syria* 62 (1985): 251.

members of the family. The three bilingual inscriptions come from the Great Colonnade, and the three Greek ones from the temple of Baalshamin.

1. *CIS* II.3, no. 3944 = *OGIS*, no. 643 = Cantineau, *Inventaire* III, no. 16 = Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 4.

   October, A.D. 251

   Σεπτίμιον Αἰράνην Ὀδ-
   αινάθου, τὸν λαμπρό-
   τατον συνκλητικόν,
   ἔξα[ρχον? τε Παλμυ]ρηνῶν,
   Αὐρήλι[ος Φιλῖνο]ς Αὐρ. Ἡλι-
   οδώρου [τοῦ Ῥααίου] στρατιώ-
   της λεγ[εῶνος Κυρηνα]ϊκῆς, τὸν
   πάτρωνα, τειμῆς καὶ εὐχα-
   ριστίας χάριν, ἔτους γξφ΄.

   line 5: or
   [.. *Φλαβιανό*]*ς*

   ṢLM' DNH DY SPṬMYWS ḤYRN BR
   'DYNT SNQLṬYQ' NHYR' WRŠ
   TDMWR DY 'QYM LH 'WRLYS
   PLYNOS BR MRY' PLYN' R'Y PLḤ'
   DBLGYWN' DY BṢR' LYQRH BYRḤ
   TŠRY DY ŠNT DLXIII

   Translation of Palmyrene:

   This is a statue of Septimius Hairan, son of Odenathus, most distinguished senator and head of Tadmor, which Aurelius Philinus [or Flavianus] son of MRY' Philinus [or Flavianus] R'Y, a soldier who (is) in the legion which (is at) Bostra, erected for him, in his honour. In the month of Tishri of the year 563.

2. Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 13. Published by Kh. As'ad and M. Gawlikowski, "New Honorific Inscriptions in the Great Colonnade of Palmyra," *AAAS* 36–37 (1986–87): 169–70, no. 10.

   April, A.D. 252

   Σεπτίμιον Ὀδαίνα-
   [θον Αἰ]ράνου Ὀ[υαβ]αλλά-
   θ[ου τοῦ Νασώρου] λα[μ]πρό-

τατον [ἔξαρχον Παλμυ]-
ρηνῶν, Ἰουλίος Αὐρήλιος
Ἀθηακά[βος Ὀ]γήλου Ζαβδι-
βώ[λου ..] KWΣΣK τοῦ καὶ Κω(ρρα ...)
τατον φίλον στοργὴς ἕ̣ν(εκεν)
ἔτους γξφ΄ μηνεὶ
[Ξανδ]ικῷ.

ṢLM 'SPṬMYWS '[DYNT BR ḤYRN] BR WHBLT NṢWR RŠ['] DY
[TDMW]R NHYR' D'BD LH 'T'QB BR 'GYLW BR ZBDBWL BR MQYMW
DMQR' QR' RḤMH LYQRHWN BRBNWTH BYRḤ NYSN ŠNT DLXIII

Translation of Palmyrene:

Statue of Septimius O[denathus son of Hairan], son of Vaballathus Nasor, distinguished head of Tadmor, which Atheacabus son of Ogelus, son of Zabdibolus, son of Mocimus, who is (also) called Cora, his friend, made for him, in their honour, in his presidency. In the month of Nisan of the year 563.

3. *CIS* II.3, no. 3945 = Cantineau, *Inventaire* III, no. 17 = Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 9.

April, A.D. 258

Σεπ[τίμιον Ὀδαίναθον]
τὸν λαμ[πρότατον ὑπατικ]ὸν
συντέ[λεια or *– χνια τῶν χρυσοχ]όων*
καὶ ἀργυ[ροκόπων τ]ὸν δεσπότην
τειμῆς χάριν, [ἔτου]ς θξφ΄
μηνεὶ Ξανδικῷ.

ṢLM' SPṬMYWS 'DYNT
NHYR' HPṬYQ' MRN DY
'QYM LH TGM' DY QYNY'
'BD' DHB' WKSP' LYQRH
BYRḤ NYSN DY ŠNT DLXVIIII

Translation of Palmyrene:

Statue of Septimius Odenathus, most distinguished *consularis*, our master, which the association [*tagma*] of workers in gold and

silver, erected to him, in his honour. In the month Nisan of the year 569.

4. Chr. Dunant, *Le sanctuaire de Baalshamin à Palmyre* III: *les inscriptions* (1971), no. 52 = Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 7.

   A.D. 257/8

   Σεπτιμίον Ὀδαίναθον
   τὸν λαμπρότατον ὑπατικὸν
   τὸ συμπόσιον τῶν κονετων
   τὸν πάτρωνα
   ἔτους θξφ΄.

5. Dunant, *Le sanctuaire de Baalshamin à Palmyre* III: *les inscriptions* (1971), 66, n. 2 = Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 8.

   A.D. 257/8

   [*Σεπτίμι*]*ον Ὀδαίναθον*
   [*τὸν*] *λαμπρότατον*
   [*ὑπ*]*ατικὸν*
   [*τὸ*] *συμπόσιον*
   [*τῶν*] *Ουαννων τὸν*
   [*π*]*άτρωνα*
   ἔτους θξφ΄

6. H. Seyrig, "Les fils du roi Odainat," *Ann. Arch. Ar. Syr.* 13 (1963): 159 = Gawlikowski, *Syria* 62 (1985): no. 5.

   A.D. 257/8

   [*Σεπτίμιον*] *Αἰράνην τὸν*
   λαμπρότατον (*υἱὸν*) *Ὀδαι-*
   νάθου τοῦ λαμπρο-
   τάτου ὑπατικοῦ τὸ
   συμπόσιον σκυτο- (sic)
   ων καὶ ἀσκοναυτο –
   ποιῶν τὸν πάτρωνα
   ἔτους θξφ.΄

The two inscriptions of the Seleucid year 563 (A.D. 251/2) relate to a son of Odenathus, Septimius Hairanes, who is himself already of Roman senatorial rank, *συγκλητικός*/SNQLṬYQ'. It is extremely significant that the earliest of all (no. 1) is an honorific inscription put up to him not by the Palmyrenes

but by a soldier from the Legion III Cyrenaica, stationed at Bostra: in Palmyrene PLḤ' [soldier] DB LGYWN' DY BṢR'. Septimius Hairanes was his *patronus*, duly transliterated as *πάτρων*. This expression finds no equivalent in the Palmyrene version.

By contrast, the Palmyrene text of inscription 1, like that of inscription 2, does give Hairanes a title which might well suggest an established dynastic position: RŠ TDMWR or RŠ ['] DY [TDMWR], "head of Tadmor." But we have to be careful in attributing too definite a meaning to this expression, which is not found elsewhere in the epigraphy of Palmyra. Moreover, an Aramaic and Greek bilingual inscription of the second–third century, from Khirbet Zif in ancient Idumaea, uses RŠ plus an expression denoting either a group of people or a locality as the equivalent of the Greek *πρωτοπολείτης*, "leading citizen."[26] Is there any reason to suppose that the soldier from Bostra meant anything more precise than that? The Greek equivalent in this case is baffling, partially missing in inscription 1 (*ἔ̈ξα[ρχον τε Παλμυ]ρηνῶν*) and almost completely missing in inscription 2 ([*ἔ̈ξαρχον Παλμυ]ρηνῶν*). It is clear that Hairanes is described as something "of the Palmyrenes"; but what? Restoration depends entirely on the three letters *ἔ̈ξα*[. . .]. The normal restoration, *ἔ̈ξα[ρχον]*, may well be correct, though it requires inserting *τε* to fill up the space. It might be equally possible to restore *ἔ̈ξα[ιρετός]*. But neither expression has any established usage as a technical term or in honorific inscriptions (Plutarch, however, uses *ἔ̈ξαρχος τῶν ἱερέων* for *pontifex maximus*).[27] Even without the parallel from Khirbet Zif it should be clear that we cannot base any conception of a specific role on these two restored expressions. The context is in any case firmly Roman.

All the remaining inscriptions of the 250s date to the Seleucid year 569, A.D. 257/8, that is, while Valerian was in Antioch, and not long before his fatal campaign into Mesopotamia. The only evidence that an independent military role on the part of Odenathus had begun before this is provided by Malalas, who records that he attacked and pursued the retreating Persian forces in 253; but he has very probably retrojected a role which Odenathus in fact played only in the 260s.[28]

At any rate the honorific inscription relating to Septimius Hairanes (no. 6)

26. L. Y. Rahmani, "A Bilingual Ossuary: Inscription from Khirbet Zif," *IEJ* 22 (1972): 113 = J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (1978), 302, no. A53. See also Y. Yadin, "A Note on the Bilingual Ossuary Inscription from Khirbet Zif," *IEJ* 22 (1972): 235–36.

27. Plutarch, *Numa* 10.

28. See Millar (n. 18), 159–73.

now no longer uses the term ἔξα[ρχος?] *Παλμυρηνῶν*, but refers strictly to his Roman status—*λαμπρότατος* (*vir clarissimus*, that is a senator)—and son of Odenathus, the *lamprotatos hypatikos*. This too is, of course, a Roman status, *clarissimus consularis*. It would be of considerable historical importance to know if *consularis/hypatikos* is being used here in the sense of "governor"—which would imply that he was governing the (praetorian) province of Syria Phoenice.[29] The alternative is that this is simply a status designation. But the question may remain undecided in this context. The essential point is that this is indeed a Roman status designation and that the context of this honorific inscription, as of the three erected to Odenathus himself, is civilian. All four are erected by trade or professional groups within Palmyra. These themselves present problems which need not be discussed here.

What light do these inscriptions throw on Odenathus' position within the structure of the Palmyrene community in the late 250s? We may begin with the bilingual inscription of the association of gold- and silver-workers (no. 3). Interestingly, to describe their association they use a different transliterated Greek word in the Palmyrene text from that employed in the Greek text: TGM' (*τάγμα*) DY QYNY' 'BD' DHB' WKSP'. The Greek text, largely restored, gives Odenathus, as well as his Roman rank, *consularis*, the appellation *δεσπότης*, "master," almost precisely reflected in the Palmyrene text, which calls him MRN, "our master." So is *this* perhaps a reference to his dynastic role in Palmyra? The Greek inscriptions from the temple of Baalshamin, one in honour of Odenathus' son Hairanes (no. 6), and two for Odenathus himself (nos. 4 and 5), show that any such notion would be completely misconceived. For, like the inscription put up some years earlier by the soldier of III Cyrenaica, these inscriptions reflect a personal relationship, in these cases between associations and a prominent citizen. The meaning which should be given to *δεσπότης* and MRN in inscription 3, set up by one trade-association, is clearly indicated by the term which is used in the three other contemporary inscriptions of trade associations (nos. 4–6), as it had been in that from the soldier: *πάτρων*. Far from suggesting that Odenathus was already a "prince" in Palmyra, these texts illustrate how profoundly Palmyra, while still—uniquely—retaining the public use of a Semitic language, had taken on the character of a Graeco-Roman city; and more specifically how, as a Roman *colonia* whose leading family now enjoyed high senatorial rank, Roman concepts of status and relationship had come to play a part in its social structure.

29. See B. Rémy, "*Ὑπατικοί* et *consulares* dans les provinces impériales prétoriennes au II^e^ et III^e^ siècles," *Latomus* 45 (1986): 311.

These two brief sketches of two aspects of the complex linguistic and epigraphic map of the Roman Near East can be no more than suggestive of the riches which remain still largely unexplored. The *epigraphic* use of Aramaic and its dialects evolved, throughout the region, in step with that of Greek, which was always the dominant language, and with that of Latin. If Latin always played a smaller role, it was not a negligible one, if only because all of the Near East was at all times a military area, in which the influence of the Roman army was profound. But for us to understand these mutual social, cultural, and linguistic influences more fully, the most urgent task is the reactivation of the epigraphic heritage of Dura-Europos.

CHAPTER TEN

Paul of Samosata, Zenobia, and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture, and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria[*]

Introduction

What we call the "eastern frontier" of the Roman Empire was a thing of shadows, which reflected the diplomatic convenience of a given moment, and dictated the positioning of some soldiers and customs officials, but hardly affected the attitudes or the movements of the people on either side.[1] Nothing more than the raids of desert nomads,[2] for instance, hindered the endless movement of persons and ideas between Judaea and the Babylonian Jewish community.[3] Similarly, as Lucian testifies, offerings came to the temple of Atargatis at Hierapolis/Bambyce from a wide area of the Near and Middle

[*]Originally published in *JRS* 61 (1971): 1–17. I was very grateful, for discussion and correction, to Professor A. D. Momigliano, Professor G. D. Kilpatrick, Professor P. R. L. Brown, Professor P. J. Parsons, Dr. J. Rea, Professor T. D. Barnes, and especially to M. Henri Seyrig.

1. See Philostratus, *Vit. Ap. Ty.* 1, 20, for Apollonius' famous confrontation with the customs official at Zeugma. The only evidence known to me of the frontier actually preventing movement comes in Jerome, *Vita Malchi* 3 (*PL* XXIII, 54), where Malchus, from Nisibis, relates that (sometime in the first half of the fourth century) "because I could not go to the east, because of neighbouring Persia and the Roman military guard, I turned my feet to the west."

2. Note Herod's establishment of a colony of Babylonian Jews in Batanea for the protection of caravans of pilgrims coming from Babylonia to Jerusalem. Jos., *Ant.* 17, 23–31; *Vita*, 54–61.

3. For visitors from Mesopotamia, see J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (1969), 66–67, and for the cultural and personal relations of the two communities the successive volumes by J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia* I: *The Parthian Period*[2] (1969); II: *The Early Sasanian Period* (1966); III: *From Shapur I to Shapur II* (1968); IV: *The Age of Shapur II* (1969); V: *Later Sasanian Times* (1970).

East, including Babylonia.[4] The actual movement to and fro of individuals was reflected, as we have been reminded,[5] in a close interrelation of artistic and architectural styles. Moreover, whatever qualifications have to be made in regard to specific places, it is incontestable that Semitic languages, primarily Aramaic in its various dialects, remained in active use, in a varying relationship to Greek, from the Tigris through the Fertile Crescent to the Phoenician coast. This region remained, we must now realize, a cultural unity, substantially unaffected by the empires of Rome or of Parthia or Sassanid Persia.[6]

On the face of it, these facts might seem to give added confirmation to what is the standard interpretation of the career of Paul of Samosata. The bare structure of this career, which we know essentially from Eusebius,[7] is that he succeeded Demetrianus as bishop of Antioch, was accused of heresy, and was the subject of two synods held at Antioch in about 264 and 268/9 (for the dates, see below), the second of which condemned him. On his refusal to leave the church house, his opponents made a successful petition against him to Aurelian (270–75). The accepted interpretation, represented primarily by G. Bardy's book on Paul,[8] and by Glanville Downey's standard work on the history of Antioch,[9] sets this career firmly in the context of a wide pattern of cultural and political relationships. On this view, Paul, coming from Samosata, was the champion of the "native" (Syriac- or Aramaic-speaking) element in the Antiochene church. His opponents were the representatives of Greek culture. Moreover, a remark made in the letter of the second synod retailing Paul's offences is held to mean that he held a government post as *ducenarius* (i.e., a *procurator* with a salary of 200,000 sesterces per annum; see text to n. 137 below); and later evidence is brought in to show that this will have been in the service of Palmyra, more specifically of its queen, Zenobia. Thus a conflict of cultures becomes intimately linked to a political conflict.

4. Lucian, *dea Syra* 13, 32. See text to n. 59 below.

5. J. B. Ward-Perkins, "The Roman West and the Parthian East," *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 51 (1965): 175; "Frontiere politiche e frontiere culturali," *La Persia e il mondo greco-romano*, Acc. Naz. dei Lincei, anno 363, quad. 7 (1966): 395.

6. See the remarks by P. Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," *JRS* 59 (1969): 92.

7. Eusebius, *HE* 7, 27–30.

8. G. Bardy, *Paul de Samosate: étude historique*[2], Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense IV (1929); note, however, the more cautious view of Paul in G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'église ancienne* (1948), 19.

9. G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (1961), 263–64, 310–15.

Paul owes his position to Zenobia, and his opponents' appeal to Aurelian will have taken place when the latter recaptured Antioch from the Palmyrenes in 272. In spite of the partial reservations in the excellent earlier study of Paul by F. Loofs[10] and the briefly expressed scepticism of A. Alföldi,[11] this interpretation seems to have become firmly established.[12] It also serves what appears to be the necessary function of explaining how the synod of Antioch could have petitioned a pagan emperor, and how that Emperor found it worthwhile to attend to their request, and to give it a favourable response.

The career of Paul of Samosata is thus central to a number of questions of great delicacy and importance. The collection and arrangement of the scanty and disparate evidence for the various elements of a possible "local" culture in any area of the Roman Empire are difficult enough; much more sensitive is the question of the role, function, or prestige of that culture in relation to a dominant culture.[13] It is a still more hazardous step to assert that what we know of any individual episode justifies the imposition of an explanation in terms of a local "nationalism."[14] But at the same time the very fragility and scantiness of our evidence is itself a reason for not proceeding with brusque confidence to negative conclusions.

Syriac and Greek in the East Syrian Regions and Mesopotamia

From scattered evidence we can now gain some conception of the geographical spread and profound influence of Greek culture through Meso-

10. F. Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata; eine Untersuchung zur altchristlichen Literatur und Dogmengeschichte, Texte und Untersuchungen* XLIV, 5 (1924), esp. 34.

11. *CAH* XII, 178, n. 1: "The political connections of Zenobia with Bishop Paul of Antioch seem to the present writer even less real than to Fr. Loofs." For the relevance of Alföldi's classic studies of the coinage in this period, see below text to nn. 89–106 and notes.

12. See, e.g., F. Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums* I (1930), 94; J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller, *Histoire de l'Église* II (1935), 345; H. Grégoire, *Les persécutions dans l'Empire romain*[2] (1964), 57; J. Daniélou and H. Marrou, *Nouvelle histoire de l'Église* I: *des origines à Saint Grégoire le Grand* (1963), 247; W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution* (1965), 443–44; B. Altaner and A. Stuiber, *Patrologie*[7] (1966), 214; H. Chadwick, *The Early Church* (1967), 114–15.

13. For the parallel case of North Africa, see the contrasted treatments by F. Millar, "Local Cultures in the Roman Empire: Libyan, Punic and Latin in Roman Africa," *JRS* 58 (1968): 126 (= chapter 12 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*), and P. Brown, "Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa," *JRS* 58 (1968): 85.

14. For a cautious and useful survey of this question in another region, see R. MacMullen, "Nationalism in Roman Egypt," *Aegyptus* 44 (1964): 179.

potamia to Iran, central Asia, and Afghanistan.[15] By contrast, we have from Judaea the example of a society close to the Mediterranean seaboard, whose culture was very early deeply affected by Hellenism,[16] and where the speaking of Greek was clearly widespread,[17] but which consciously maintained and developed a local culture and tradition within its Hellenised environment. We could hardly ask for a neater example of the conflict of cultures than the story of R. Gamaliel II elaborately justifying his use of the baths at Akko-Ptolemais, in spite of the presence there of a statue of Aphrodite.[18]

Moreover, we have at least one case where a change of political regime does seem to be immediately reflected in the predominance of Greek as an official language. In both language and art the kingdom of Nabataea, annexed in 106,[19] belonged to the Aramaic-Greek world mentioned above. But while the Nabataean language, as is shown by inscriptions,[20] persisted at least until the early fourth century, the "archive of Babatha," discovered in 1961, and now fully published, shows that to a significant extent Nabataean was abandoned in legal documents and replaced by Greek within a few years of the establishment of the province.[21]

15. See the brilliant survey by E. Bickerman, "The Seleucids and the Achaemenids," *Persia e il mondo greco-romano* (n. 5), 87; P. Bernard, "Aï Khanum on the Oxus: A Hellenistic City in Central Asia," *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 53 (1967): 71; L. Robert, "De Delphes à l'Oxus. Inscriptions grecques nouvelles de la Bactriane," *CRAI* (1968): 416; and in general D. Schlumberger, *L'Orient hellénisé* (1970).

16. See M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus: Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh. v. Chr.* (1969), and F. Millar, "The Background to the Maccabean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's 'Judaism and Hellenism,'" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 29 (1978): 1–21 (= chapter 4 of the present volume).

17. The evidence, from a variety of periods, is collected by J. N. Sevenster, *Do You Know Greek? How Much Greek Could the First Jewish Christians Have Known?* (1968).

18. Mishnah, *Abodah Zarah*, 3:4 (ed. Danby, 440). On the more permissive attitude to representational art which developed in the second and third centuries, see, e.g., C. H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report* VIII, I: *The Synagogue* (1956), 340–46; E. E. Urbach, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry in the Second and Third Centuries in the Light of Archaeological and Historical Facts," *IEJ* 9 (1959): 149, 229.

19. See G. W. Bowersock, "The Annexation and Initial Garrison of Arabia," *ZPE* 5 (1970): 37.

20. See the excellent survey of J. Starcky, "Pétra et la Nabatène," *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supp.* VII (1966), 886–1017, esp. 921.

21. See N. Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (1989); Y. Yadin, J. C. Greenfield, A. Yardeni, and B. Levine, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Hebrew, Aramaic and Nabatean Aramaic Papyri* (2002),

Thus the wider background provides an ample justification for posing the question whether the development of Syriac literature, almost entirely Christian, and of the distinctive Syriac script, reflects some wider cultural and political movement, to which both the rise of Palmyra and heretical movements in the church within Roman Syria might conceivably be related.

All the places which are most relevant—Osrhoene, Palmyra, and Samosata—belong to that wide region on either side of the Euphrates over which Roman rule was steadily extended in the course of the first three centuries of the Empire. Beyond this area too, in Parthian and Sassanid Mesopotamia and Iran, it is generally accepted that cultural changes were taking place, with a steady eclipse of Hellenism in the surviving Greek cities in the later Parthian period;[22] though it is notable that, as late as the end of the first century A.D., a Greek geographer could be produced by distant Charax at the head of the Persian Gulf.[23] Nor is it clear that it was mere vainglory that led to Greek being one of the three languages of the great inscription of Shapur I on the Kaaba of Zoraster at Naqsh-i-Rustam.[24]

The rise of Syriac belongs to the "frontier" area along the Euphrates and to Osrhoene, with its capital Edessa. The Syriac cursive script is first attested on an inscription of A.D. 6 from Birecik on the left bank of the Euphrates, and a couple of other inscriptions come from the same region later in the century.[25] More important is the earliest surviving Syriac document on perishable material, the deed of sale written at Edessa in 243 and found at Dura-Europos.[26] From Edessa we have the apparently eye-witness account of the flood of A.D. 201, later incorporated in the Syriac *Chronicle of Edessa*,[27]

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with H. M. Cotton, "The Languages of the Legal and Administrative Documents from the Judaean Desert," *ZPE* 125 (1999): 219–31.

22. For the Greek colonies and cities of Mesopotamia, see, e.g., A. H. M. Jones, *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*[2] (1971), chap. IX; N. Pigulevskaja, *Les villes de l'état iranien aux époques parthe et sassanide* (1963), esp. chaps. I–IV; M. A. R. Colledge, *The Parthians* (1967), 96–97.

23. For the date of Isidorus of Charax, see S. A. Nodelman, "A Preliminary History of Characene," *Berytus* 13 (1960): 88, on 107–8.

24. For the text, A. Maricq, "Res Gestae Divi Shaporis," *Syria* 35 (1958): 295.

25. A. Maricq, "La plus ancienne inscription syriaque; celle de Birecik," *Syria* 39 (1962): 88; cf. J. Pirenne, "Aux origines de la graphie syriaque," *Syria* 40 (1963): 101, and E. Jenni, "Die altsyrischen Inschriften, 1–3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 21 (1965): 371.

26. *P. Dura* 28, re-edited by J. A. Goldstein, "The Syriac Bill of Sale from Dura-Europos," *JNES* 25 (1966): 1; cf. H. M. Cotton, W. Cockle, and F. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): no. 160.

27. Ed. L. Hallier, *Texte und Untersuchungen* IX.1 (1892); see 86–87.

and more significantly the writings (all now lost except the *Book of the Laws of Countries*) of the heretic Bardesanes (154–c. 220).[28] In the face of this important development we perhaps forget that Edessa too was a Macedonian colony.[29] Bardesanes was literate in both Greek and Syriac,[30] as was his son Harmonius, who was educated in Athens, and composed hymns in Syriac;[31] and Bardesanes' Syriac works were translated into Greek by his disciples.[32] In short, Bardesanes was the product of a mixed culture, where it may be impossible for us to determine what the values attached to each language were, or even, in certain cases, which the original language of a particular work was. Thus, for instance, only the most careful analysis can make it probable that the *Odes of Solomon* were written in Syriac, and translated into Greek by the third century, from when we have a papyrus text in Greek of *Ode* XI.[33]

Edessa may not have been totally different from another Macedonian foundation much better known to us, Dura-Europos. Here, together with a preponderance of Semitic cults, Greek documents still far outnumber all others (in Latin, Pahlavi and Middle Persian, Parthian, Safaitic, Palmyrene, Aramaic, and Syriac), even from the latest, Roman, period of the city.[34] Furthermore, one of the Greek documents (*P. Dura* 10) serves to illustrate the extraordinary tangle of confusions which tends to beset any attempt to portray the cultural framework of early Eastern Christianity. This is the Greek fragment of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian; in spite of the obvious implications of the name, and the fact that no source actually says so, it has frequently been argued that this was originally composed in Syriac. In fact there are no valid linguistic arguments against the prima facie deduction from this very

28. See H. J. W. Drijvers, *Bardaisan of Edessa* (1966).

29. See J. B. Segal, *Edessa, "The Blessed City"* (1970); see 30–31 for traces of Greek culture there in this period.

30. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 56, 1, 2; cf. Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* 1, 22 (*PG* LXXXIII, 372), mentioning Syriac only.

31. Sozomenus, *Hist. Eccles*. 3, 16, 5–7; Theodoret (n. 30).

32. Euseb., *HE* 4, 30, 1; Jerome, *de vir. ill*. 33.

33. See J. A. Emerton, "Some Problems of Text and Language in the Odes of Solomon," *J. Theol. St*. 18 (1967): 372.

34. For surveys, see C. B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of A. C. Johnson* (1951), 251; G. D. Kilpatrick, "Dura-Europos: The Parchments and the Papyri," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 5 (1964): 215. See also F. Millar, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule," in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse* (Historia-Einzelschrift 122, 1998), 473–92 (= chapter 16 of the present volume).

early text that Greek was the original language.[35] But what was the origin of Tatian himself? In his *Address to the Greeks*, itself written in Greek, he says (claiming for Christianity the prevailing prestige of oriental wisdom,[36] but also neatly exhibiting the prevailing confusion of cultures): "These things, I, Tatianos, arguing against the barbarians, composed for you, Greek men; although born in the Assyrian land, I was first educated in your [culture]."[37] "Assyria," it has been asserted,[38] must thus refer to the land east of the Tigris. But the word could be applied to southern Mesopotamia,[39] and is even used, by a literary conceit, of places within Roman Syria. Lucian, from Samosata, calls himself an "Assyrian" (see below), while Philostratus seems to apply it to the inhabitants of Antioch[40]—and equally to a man from Nineveh.[41] Clement, a near contemporary, calls Tatian simply, "the Syrian."[42] Of all our sources only the not always reliable Epiphanius says anything definite about his origins; after saying separately that he was "a Greek by birth" and that he was (again) a "Syrian," he records that his preaching began in Mesopotamia and continued, after a visit to Rome, in the area of Antioch, Pisidia, and Cilicia.[43] We cannot in fact state the origin of Tatian, any more than we can of the "Assyrian" Prepon, who, according to the contemporary Hippolytus, wrote against Bardesanes (whom he calls an "Armenian"[44]—while Porphyry, later in the century, calls him a "Babylonian").[45] But the very fact that clear definitions of locality and nationality are wanting has its own significance.

All that has been said applied equally to Paul's native city, Samosata. Most of what we know of it relates to the royal house finally deposed by Vespasian about A.D. 72, with its mixed Iranian and Greek traditions, and the vast inscriptions in Greek relating to the royal cult, from the *hierothesion* (sacred monument) of Mithridates Callinicus at Arsameia on the Nymphaios and

35. See Kilpatrick (n. 34), 222–24.

36. Compare A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermés Trismégiste* I (1944), chap. II, "Les prophètes de l'Orient."

37. *Address to the Greeks*, 42, ed. E. Schwartz, *Texte und Untersuchungen* IV.1 (1888).

38. E.g., A. Vööbus, *Early Versions of the New Testament: Manuscript Studies* (1954), 1; P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*[2] (1959), 283–84.

39. See A. Maricq, "La province d'Assyrie créée par Trajan," *Syria* 36 (1959): 254; cf. P. Brown (n. 6), 93.

40. Philos, *Vit. Ap. Ty.* 1, 16.

41. Philos, *Vit. Ap. Ty.* 1, 19.

42. *Strom.* 3, 12/81, 1; see also Theodoret, *Haer. fab. comp.* 1, 20 (*PG* LXXXIII, 369).

43. *Panarion* 46, 1.

44. Hippolytus, *Elenchus* 7, 31, 1–2.

45. Porphyry, *de abstinentia* 4, 17.

of Antiochus I on Nemrud Dagh, with its magnificent free-standing sculptures.[46] We would expect that here, as in the other border regions absorbed by Rome, Greek and a dialect of Aramaic persisted together. This is tentatively confirmed by the evidence of Lucian (who in different passages calls himself both an "Assyrian" and a "Syrian")[47] when in the *Bis Accusatus* (Twice Accused) 27 he makes "Rhetoric," in the role of his accuser, call him as a youth "a barbarian still, so far as he sounds, and still wearing a Persian garment after the Assyrian fashion." This could easily be dismissed as a depiction of standard rhetorical exaggeration, referring at most to a local accent or a mere rusticity. But we have just enough evidence to show that such a conclusion would be over-hasty. For what may be the earliest product of Syriac literature, the letter of Mara bar Sarapion,[48] is the work of a Samosatene writing to his son in the period after the expulsion of some citizens from there (including the writer) by the Romans; the occasion cannot be definitely determined, and might be any moment from the capture in 72 to the third century. Moreover we have an apparently genuine martyr act from Samosata, written in Syriac and relating to the early fourth century.[49]

From the mere fact that Paul is described as a Samosatene we cannot simply assume that he was born and brought up there.[50] But if we grant that it is probable that he had some substantial connection with the place, then it is not unlikely that he spoke Syriac as well as Greek (for there can be no possible doubt that he used Greek as bishop of Antioch). But, even so, the speaking or writing of Syriac did not of itself represent a rival, "oriental," culture. Just as early Syriac documents and literary works exhibit numerous Greek loan-words,[51] so for instance the letter of Mara bar Sarapion itself has a Stoic colouring and is replete with allusions from the history of classical Greece.[52]

Moreover, the same doubts which must be felt about the "orientalism"

46. See F. K. Dörner and R. Neumann, *Forschungen in Kommagene* (1939); F. K. Dörner and T. Goell, *Arsameia am Nymphaios: Die Ausgrabungen im Hierothesion des Mithridates Kallinikos von 1955–1956* (1963). Cf. F. K. Dörner, *Kommagene, ein wiederentdecktes Königreich*[2] (1967).

47. *dea Syra* 1: "and I write, being an Assyrian." *Scyth.* 9: "us Syrians."

48. Text and English translation (70–76) by W. Cureton, *Spicilegium Syriacum* (1855). Cf. F. Schulthess, "Der Brief des Mara bar Sarapion," *ZDMG* 51 (1897): 365; R. Duval, *La littérature syriaque*[2] (1900), 248–50; A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (1922), 10.

49. See Duval (n. 48), 129.

50. Compare the remarks of R. Syme, "Hadrian and Italica," *JRS* 54 (1964): 142.

51. See A. Schall, *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen* (1960), 27–128.

52. The writer uses, in the course of providing *exempla*, the names of Polycrates, Achilles, Agamemnon, Priam, Archimedes, Socrates, Pythagoras, Palamedes, and Plato.

of Paul apply to Palmyra itself. For while no one can question either the total predominance of Semitic cults there or the vigour and splendour of the native Palmyrene art and architecture, the city (now a Roman colony) was officially bilingual in Palmyrene and Greek[53] (though Palmyrene nomenclature in particular suggests that the population was in fact largely of Arab stock).[54] But it is only the *Historia Augusta* which appears to imply that Zenobia could not write a letter in Greek.[55] That point arises in connection with one of the only two facts we can be said to know about the culture and historical outlook of Zenobia. The first is that she brought to her court Longinus, the foremost Greek literary scholar of his day.[56] The second is that in Egypt she identified herself with Cleopatra; so it was to her under this name that a Greek rhetor, Callinicus of Petra, dedicated his history of Alexandria.[57]

Thus the wider cultural background of the third-century Near East is fraught with ambiguities. Before coming to the events of the 260s and 270s it remains to look at Roman Syria proper. Is there anything to suggest either the survival of non-classical traditions or the development of a local strain in Syrian Christianity?

Local Culture in Roman Syria

Abundant evidence illustrates the survival of pre-Hellenic cult centres in Roman Syria and its environs. One need only mention by way of example the

53. For a survey, see J. Starcky, *Palmyre* (1952); cf. also le Comte du Mesnil du Buisson, *Les Tessères et les monnaies de Palmyre: un art, une culture et une philosophie grecs dans les moules d'une cité et d'une religion sémitiques* (1962).

54. See A. Caquot, "Sur l'onomastique religieuse de Palmyre," *Syria* 39 (1962): 231; cf. H. Seyrig in *Syria* 47 (1970): 87–92.

55. *HA*, *Aurel*. 30, 3: "It was regarded as a cruel thing that Longinus the philosopher should have been among those killed. He, it is said, was employed by Zenobia as her teacher in Greek letters, and Aurelian is said to have slain him because he was told that that overproud letter of hers was dictated in accordance with his counsel, although it was in fact composed in the Syrian tongue" (Loeb translation).

56. *HA* (n. 55); Zosimus 1, 56, 2–3; Photius, *Bib*. 265, 492. Bekker (see below text to n. 144); Syncellus 1, 721 Bonn. For the text of a letter from Longinus written to Porphyry in Sicily (so between c. 267, Porph., *Vit. Plot*. 6, and 272) inviting him to join him in "Phoenicia," see Porph., *Vit. Plot*. 19. Libanius, *Ep*. 1078 Förster (998 Wolf), mentions a *logos Oudainathos* of Longinus, presumably a funeral address. Cf. *RE*, s.v. "Longinus."

57. See A. Stein, "Kallinikos von Petrai," *Hermes* 58 (1923): 448; J. Schwartz, "Les Palmyréniens en Égypte," *Bull. Soc. Ant. Alex*. 40 (1953): 63; A. D. E. Cameron in *CQ*, n.s., 17 (1967): 382–83.

cult of Perasia at Hierapolis/Castabala[58] (in the province of Cilicia); of Atargatis at Hierapolis-Bambyce, brilliantly described by Lucian in the *dea Syra*,[59] or of Elagabal at Emesa.[60] Equally clear is the continuous tradition of the cults of cities on the Phoenician coastline from the second millennium B.C. into the Roman period. It is particularly significant that this was a conscious survival. For in the first half of the second century A.D. Philon of Byblos claimed to have composed his *Phoenicica* on the basis of a work in Phoenician (a language related to Aramaic and Hebrew) by one Sanchuniathon, who dated from before the Trojan wars and who in fact perhaps belonged in the Persian or early Hellenistic period and may have written in a dialect of Aramaic.[61] Philon's work is important both in showing that an educated Greek could be explicitly conscious of the non-Hellenic traditions of his homeland and in filling out the very scanty documentary record of Phoenician from this period. The record indeed hardly extends beyond the Hellenistic age: we have for instance a Phoenician inscription from Oumm El-'Amed dated to 132 B.C.,[62] and another from Byblos which may be from the early Roman period, perhaps as late as the first century A.D.[63] More securely dated, to 96 B.C., is the latest of a series of bilingual Sidonian inscriptions from Athens and the Peiraeus.[64] About 100 B.C. Meleager, in an epigram recording his birth at Gadara, his move to Tyre, and his old age in Cos, neatly contrasts the form of greeting in Aramaic, Phoenician, and Greek.[65] In the third century

58. See A. Dupont-Sommer and L. Robert, *La déesse de Hiérapolis-Castabala, Cilicie* (1964), relating a fourth-century B.C. Aramaic inscription to documents of the classical period.

59. See H. Stocks, "Studien zu Lukians 'de Syria dea,' " *Berytus* 4 (1937): 1; G. Goossens, *Hiérapolis de Syrie: essai de monographie historique* (1943).

60. For the essentials, see *RAC*, s.v. "Elagabal."

61. For the *Phoenicica* of Philon of Byblos, see Jacoby *FGrH* 790 F. 1–7; on Sanchuniathon, see *RE*, s.v. "Sanchuniathon," and M. L. West, *Hesiod, Theogony* (1966), 24–28; cf., e.g., O. Eissfeldt, "Art und Aufbau der phönizischen Geschichte des Philo von Byblos," *Syria* 33 (1956): 88 = *Kleine Schriften* III (1966), 398. Note especially, on both the survival of Phoenician gods and the work of Philo, le Comte du Mesnil du Buisson, *Études sur les dieux phéniciens hérités par l'Empire romain* (1970).

62. M. Dunand and R. Duru, *Oumm El-'Amed, une ville de l'époque hellénistique aux échelles de Tyre* (1962), no. 1 = H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*[2] I–III (1966–69), no. 18.

63. Donner and Röllig (n. 62), no. 12. Compare, however, J. Brian Peckham, *The Development of the Late Phoenician Scripts* (1968), 54.

64. See Peckham (n. 63), 78.

65. *Anth. Pal.* 7, 419, lines 5–8; A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* I (1965), 217: "whom heavenborn Tyre and Gadara's holy soil reared to manhood

we may note that Porphyry of Tyre gained this name, by which he is always known, from a word-play by Longinus (whose mother came from Emesa)[66] on his original name, "Malchus."[67] Earlier, as Porphyry himself explains, his friends had been accustomed to nickname him simply "Basileus."[68] It is clear at least that Porphyry and his friends knew that in his native tongue (*patrios dialektos*) MLK meant "King." Whether he had a real knowledge of Phoenician (or Aramaic), and whether his studies of the Old Testament involved any knowledge of Hebrew, remains obscure.[69]

Further north on the Phoenician coastline, from the cities around Aradus and up to Gabala, we may note the presence of Semitic lettering on coins of the Hellenistic period,[70] the bilingual inscription of a man from Aradus who died at Demetrias in Thessaly about 200 B.C.,[71] and also a bilingual inscription (*IGLS* 4001) from Aradus itself, dating to 25/4 B.C. But thereafter there is a gap of centuries before we learn from Socrates that Severianus, bishop of Gabala in the early fifth century, though supposedly educated, spoke Greek with difficulty and in a definite Syrian accent.[72]

The best confirmation, however, of the possibility that Philon of Byblos might have known Phoenician or Aramaic comes from a remarkable source, a scholion found in one of the manuscripts of Photius' account of Iamblichus, the Greek novelist of the second century A.D. The information is represented as coming from Iamblichus himself and has certainly every appearance of being circumstantial. According to the passage, Iamblichus recorded that he was a Syrian on both his mother's and his father's side—"not one of the Greeks inhabiting Syria, but one of the natives, speaking their language and living by their customs." He acquired his knowledge of Babylonian lore from

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and beloved Cos of Meropes tended his old age. If you are Syrian, Salam! If you are Phoenician, Naidios! If you are Greek, Chaire! And say the same yourself!" (Loeb translation).

66. Suda 735.

67. Eunapius, *Vit. Soph*. 456.

68. Porph., *Vit. Plot*. 17: " 'Basileus' is my [Porphyry's] name; I am called Malkos in my native tongue, for this name also my father used to call me. And 'Basileus,' the translation of Malkos, if anyone wishes to change it into Greek." Cf. *Vit. Plot*. 20, 21.

69. Cf. J. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre* (1913), 9–10. I have not, however, found any serious discussion of this question. See F. Millar, "Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language and Alien Wisdom," in J. Barnes and M. T. Griffin, eds., *Philosophia Togata* II: *Plato and Aristotle at Rome* (1997), 241–62 (= chapter 13 of the present volume).

70. H. Seyrig, "Monnaies hellénistiques," *Rev. Num*. 6 (1964): 7, esp. 19–20, 46–47.

71. O. Masson, "Recherches sur les Phéniciens dans le monde héllenistique," *BCH* 43 (1969): 698.

72. Socrates, *Hist. Eccles*. 6, 11, 3.

a captive taken in Trajan's Parthian campaign; later he was trained in Greek and became a skilled orator.[73]

This is the only item of evidence from a pagan source which clearly implies the existence of a whole class of educated Aramaic-speaking persons in Roman Syria, and as such is of great importance. For further evidence on the use of Aramaic in Syria we have to wait until the Christian period, whose literature, as always, allows us insight into social levels which pagan literature tended systematically to ignore.[74] Though Christian writers call the native language of Syria "Syrian," it was actually what we call Aramaic, and it will save confusion to reserve "Syriac" for the dialect of Edessa, the script associated with it, and the literary language developed from it. In assembling the evidence it will not be necessary to pay special attention to those passages where Christian writers merely refer generally to Aramaic or to the meanings of individual words in it;[75] what is important is to examine those items which give some indication of the geographical or social range of Aramaic-speaking, and its role within the church.

It so happens that much of the relevant evidence relates to the gentile population of Palestine and its environs. The earliest Christian evidence comes from the "long," Syriac, recension of Eusebius' *Martyrs of Palestine*, and relates to Procopius, a martyr from Scythopolis executed in 303, who had the role of interpreting into Aramaic in the church there.[76] What is meant by this is revealed by the detailed report of the conduct of services in Aelia (Jerusalem) made a century later by the pilgrim Egeria (or Aetheria). She found that part of the congregation spoke only Greek, part only Aramaic, and part both. But the bishop, even if he knew Aramaic, spoke only Greek in conducting services, while a presbyter had the task of translating his words into Aramaic. Similarly, readings from the Bible were made first in Greek, and then interpreted.[77] Nothing could demonstrate more clearly the values attached to the two languages. One may compare with it the closely related evidence of Jerome, describing the funeral of Saint Paula in

73. Photius, *Bib.* 94, (75b), ed. Henry, II, 40.

74. For collections of relevant passages in Christian writers, see C. Charon, "L'origine ethnographique des Melkites," *Echos d'Orient* 11 (1908): 35, 82; G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'église ancienne* (1948), 19–31; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (1964), 994.

75. See, e.g., Jerome, *Vita Pauli* 6 (*PL* XXIII, 21); *In Esaiam* 9, 29, 1–8 (*CCL* LXXIII, 370); Theodoret, *Hist. Eccles.* 1, 7, 4; 3, 24, 1; 4, 10, 1; *Hist. Relig.* 13 (*PG* LXXXII, 1400, 1404).

76. For the text, see B. Violet, *Texte und Untersuchungen* XIV, 4 (1896), 4 and 7; cf. H. Delehaye, *Les légendes hagiographiques* (1905), 142ff.

77. *Pereg. Egeriae* 47, 3–4 (*CCL* CLXXV, 89); ed. H. Pétre, *Éthérie, Journal de Voyage, Sources Chrétiennes* 21 (1948), 260–61.

Bethlehem in 404—"the Psalms were sung in Greek, Latin, and Syriac in this order."[78]

Towards the middle of the fourth century we find the hermit Hilarion, in the desert outside Gaza, questioning a Frankish officer of Constantius in Aramaic, and miraculously causing the man to answer likewise; Hilarion then repeated his question in Greek. He was clearly in fact bilingual; he came from a village near Gaza and in his youth had been to study with a *grammateus* in Alexandria. Aramaic was evidently common, but not universal, in the towns of this area. Retailing an incident when Hilarion visited Elusa, Jerome emphasises that the place was *semibarbarus*: a large crowd abandoned a festival of Venus which was in progress there and greeted Hilarion with shouts of *Barech*—"Bless [us]."[79] In 402 we find in Gaza itself a child, seized by divine possession, calling out in Aramaic instructions for the burning of the temple of Marnas there, and repeating them in Greek when interrogated by the bishop, Porphyry. But, when interrogated herself, his mother swears that neither she nor her son knows Greek.[80]

From Syria proper we do not have so much clear evidence. But Jerome speaks of a hermit named Malchus living in a village thirty miles east of Antioch—"A Syrian [*Syrus*], by nationality and language, as a native of the same place would be," though in fact he says later that the man was by origin an immigrant from Nisibis.[81] But what of Antioch itself? Theodoret, who was born and educated in Antioch, and was bishop of Cyrrhus in the first half of the fifth century, wrote entirely in Greek but certainly knew Aramaic and used his knowledge in interpreting the Bible.[82] It is not likely, however, that he learnt it in Antioch itself. For the clearest indication of the linguistic situation there comes from John Chrysostom, who in a sermon preached in the city describes the country people coming in for a Christian festival as a "people different from us so far as their language is concerned, but kin to us in their faith."[83] It seems indisputable that he means that, characteristi-

78. Jerome, *Ep.* 108, 29 (*PL* XXII, 905 = *CSEL* LV, 348).

79. Jerome, *Vit. Hil.* 2, 22, 23, 25 (*PL* XXIII 29, 39–41).

80. Marc. Diac., *Vit. Porph.* 66–68, ed. H. Grégoire and M.-A. Kugener (1930).

81. Jerome, *Vita. Malchi* 2–3 (*PL* XXIII, 54).

82. That he was a native Aramaic speaker would be an improper deduction from the modesty of his own claim to Greek culture in *Graec. affect. curatio* 5 (*PG* LXXXIII, 952). But that he understood spoken Aramaic is clear from the incident in *Hist. Relig.* 21 (*PG* LXXII, 1441); cf. n. 75.

83. John Chrys., *Hom. 19 ad pop. Ant. I* (*PG* XLIX, 188); cf. *Serm. de mart.* 1 (*PG* L, 646). On the other hand, *Hom. Matt.* 7, 2 (*PG* LVII, 74), seems to imply the presence of some Aramaic speakers in his audience, hence in the city.

cally at least, the Christians of Antioch spoke Greek and those of its territory (*chora*) Aramaic. Similarly, Theodoret mentions a hermit from the territory of Cyrrhus who knew no Greek.[84]

Thus, though the evidence is slight and scattered, it is sufficient to show that Aramaic was a living language in Roman Syria. But all the indications are that it remained a rustic vernacular with no claim to rival Greek as a language of culture;[85] it does not seem to have been until the fifth century that Syriac came to be the vehicle of literature written in Roman Syria.[86] Furthermore, although the appearance of a Christian Syriac literature in Edessa in the second and third centuries is something of great interest and importance, it seems likely that we should see it as an off-shoot of, rather than as a rival to, Christian Greek culture. In short, just as it seems unlikely that either a man from Samosata or a ruler of Palmyra could have seen himself as in any sense representative of the "Orient" as against the Graeco-Roman world, so there is very little to indicate that such a claim would have evoked any response in Roman Syria. More particularly, the most we could claim from parallel and later evidence for the church at Antioch is that in the third century it may have begun to penetrate to the non-Hellenised strata of the population.

These considerations must tend to call in question certain presuppositions from which the events of the 260s and 270s have been approached. That done, it is time to consider the course of these events themselves.

Palmyra and Antioch

If we turn from the complex and elusive questions of the cultural background to the more immediate and concrete political setting, the primary question is chronological—when did Palmyrene control of Antioch begin?

The relevant events begin with the capture of Valerian in 259/60 by Shapur I, and the subsequent capture of Antioch.[87] After this campaign Shapur

84. Theod., *Hist. Relig.* 17 (*PG* LXXXII, 1420, 1424).

85. Note, however, Theodoret's account of a fourth-century monastic foundation near Zeugma where the original group of Greek-speaking monks was soon followed by one of Aramaic-speakers, which was kept separate but had complete parity with the first, in *Hist. Relig.* 5 (*PG* LXXXII, 1352–57).

86. See Duval (n. 48), 5; Baumstark (n. 48), 58ff.; I. Ortiz di Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca* (1958), chap. V.

87. The date 259 rather than 260 is argued by S. Lopuszanski, *La date de la capture de Valérien et la chronologie des empereurs gaulois* (1951); cf. Th. Pekáry, "Bemerkungen zur Chronologie des Jahrzehnts 250–60 n. Chr.," *Historia* 11 (1963): 123, and *PIR*² L 258.

retired, attacked en route by Odenathus of Palmyra.[88] At the same time there came the proclamation as *Augusti* of Macrianus and Quietus by their father, Macrianus, and the praetorian prefect Ballista (Callistus).[89] All that is necessary to note in the present context is that their regime lasted at least until 261 (as revealed, for instance, in a papyrus dated to 17 May in their second joint consulate and first Egyptian year, so 261).[90] Macrianus advanced into Europe and was defeated by Gallienus. Quietus was defeated by Odenathus. It is important to note that our admittedly scanty sources say that the victory took place at Emesa.[91] Was the Palmyrene presence on the upper Orontes at this moment followed by either a physical occupation or an effective overlordship of the cities of Roman Syria? Documentary evidence shows that by 258 Odenathus had the title *hypatikos* (consular)—but this does not (as has been claimed) serve to prove that he was governor of Syria-Phoenice.[92] In about 260 he is alleged (see below) to have received the title *corrector totius Orientis* ("controller" or perhaps "restorer of the entire East") from Gallienus, and almost certainly assumed rather than was given that of "king of kings." The available evidence on his movements and activities shows, however, nothing further concerned with the Roman province, but rather two invasions of Mesopotamia, reaching to Ctesiphon.[93] He is first heard of in Roman Syria again at the moment of his murder, again at Emesa,[94] which took place in 267/8.[95] During this period it is notable that the mint of Antioch continues

88. The evidence is late—Festus, *Brev.* 23; Jerome, *Chron.*, ed. Helm, 221; *HA*, *Trig. Tyr.* 15, 1–4; *Vit. Val.* 4, 2–4; Malalas, *Chron.* 297, 4 Dindorf; Syncellus, 716 (Bonn); Zonaras 12, 23; J. Février, *Essai sur l'histoire politique et économique de Palmyere* (1931), 81–84; J. Starcky, *Palmyre* (1952), 53ff. The essential modern treatment of the chronology of Odenathus and Vabalathus and their successive titulatures is D. Schlumberger, "L'inscription d'Hérodien: remarques sur l'histoire des princes de Palmyre," *Bull. d'Ét. orient.* 9 (1942–43): 35.

89. For the best account see A. Alföldi, "Die römische Münzprägung und die historischen Ereignisse im Osten zwischen 260 und 270 n. Chr.," *Berytus* 5 (1938): 47 = *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus* (1967), 155.

90. *P. Oxy.* XXXIV 2710.

91. Zon. 12, 24; cf. *HA*, *Vit. Gall.* 3, 4, and Petrus Petricius, *FHG* IV, 195 = Dio, ed. Boissevain III, 744.

92. *Contra* Schlumberger (n. 88), 48, and J. Starcky (n. 88), 54. The title appears in *IGR* III, 1031 = J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre III* (1930), no. 17. Cf. D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (1950), chap. XXIX, n. 32.

93. See Février (n. 88), 85ff.; Alföldi (n. 89), 76ff. (188ff.).

94. Zosimus 1, 39, 2. Note, however, the variant tradition of Syncellus 1, 716–17 (Bonn), according to which he was killed in Cappadocia on his way to repel a Gothic invasion.

95. Probably between 29 August 267 and 28 August 268, because Alexandrian coins

to produce coins for Gallienus from 263 up to the moment of his death in 268, and for Claudius up to 269; the coinage provides no suggestion of the detachment of Syria from the Roman Empire up to this time.[96] Confirmation both of normal minting at Antioch up to 269 and of unsettled circumstances immediately after that is provided by a hoard from near Bogazköy which includes 87 coins of Gallienus, and 427 of Claudius minted at Antioch.[97]

The same story is told by both the literary sources and the documentary evidence on titulature. Vabalathus began by assuming the titles, *corrector* (see below) and "king of kings." In 270 he advanced to *consul*, *dux Romanorum*, and *Imperator*, though acknowledging Aurelian as *Augustus*. His own proclamation as "Augustus" came after August 271, when Zenobia appears without the title "Augusta" on an inscription from Palmyra.[98] The coinage of Antioch confirms that it did not come until the spring of 272, almost at the very moment of Aurelian's reconquest.[99]

The decisive break, however, and the Palmyrene occupation of Syria, had clearly happened before this. Exactly how soon, it is not easy to say. Zosimus portrays Aurelian, after the Danubian campaign of his first year (270),[100] reckoning with the Palmyrene occupation both of Egypt and of all Asia Minor up to Ankara.[101] Earlier, Zosimus places the invasion of Egypt under Claudius (268–70) and says that Syrian troops were used for it;[102] this squares with the evidence of Malalas (299, 4) that Zenobia took Arabia from the Romans

seem to show the fourth year of Vabalathus ending on 28 August 271. See Schlumberger (n. 88), 61.

96. See Alföldi (n. 89), and *CAH* XII, 178–79. Cf. C. Brenot and H.-G. Pflaum, "Les émissions orientales de la fin du III^{e} siècle après J.-C. à la lumière de deux trésors découverts en Syrie," *Rev. Num.* 7 (1965): 134; cf. J.-P. Callu, *La politique monétaire des empereurs romains de 238 à 311*, *Bib. Ec. Fr. Ath. Rom.* 214 (1969): 220–21.

97. K. Bittel, "Funde im östlichen Galatien: ein römischer Münzschatz von Devret," *Ist. Mitt.* 6 (1955): 27.

98. J. Cantineau, *Inventaire* III (1930), no. 20 = *OGIS* 648; see Starcky (n. 88), 58.

99. See Schlumberger (n. 88), and H. Seyrig, "Vabalathus Augustus," *Mélanges Michalowski* (1966), 659. Note, however, an ostracon, *O. Mich.* 1006 (*Greek Ostraca in the University of Michigan Collection* III [1935]; see *Michigan Papyri* VIII [1951]), which dates to May–June 271 and describes Aurelian and Athenodorus (Vabalathus) as Augusti.

100. Dated to 270 by A. Alföldi, "Über die Juthungeneinfälle unter Aurelian," *BIAB* 16 (1950): 21 = *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus* (1967), 427. But see n. 164 below.

101. Zos. 1, 50, 1.

102. Zos. 1, 44; cf. *HA*, *Claud.* 2, 1–2. Compare the inscription published by H. Seyrig, *Syria* 31 (1954): 214–17. Originating probably from the Hauran, it refers to the deaths of many persons in Egypt, probably men recruited by Palmyra.

under Claudius. The Egyptian evidence shows the invasion coming in the regime of the prefect Probus in 269/70;[103] papyri and Alexandrian coins suggest that the actual capture of the city did not take place until the end of 270.[104] This agrees absolutely with the fact that the offerings the Palmyrenes made at the shrine of Aphrodite at Aphaca, between Baalbek and Byblos, were presented only a year before their final disaster in 272,[105] and that the inscription of Zenobia from near Byblos calls her "Augusta," and therefore seems to belong in the latest period, probably 272.[106]

From this evidence it is not inconceivable that the Palmyrene drive southwest, through Arabia to Egypt, came before the occupation of northern Syria. It is possible that Antioch was not occupied until 270; none of our evidence firmly indicates any earlier date.[107] We must accept that Emesa was firmly within the Palmyrene sphere of control through the 260s; but the territory of Emesa bordered that of Palmyra itself, and the two cities had close cultural ties.[108] Have we any evidence to suggest the existence of a wider sphere of Palmyrene influence throughout this period?

Firstly, we have the title which is alleged to have been held by Odenathus from about 260, and inherited by Vabalathus in 267/8, namely *corrector totius Orientis*.[109] If genuine, such an expression might indeed give some justification for the notion of an active Palmyrene patronage in Syrian cities. But nothing in our documentary evidence justifies the supposition of such a Latin title. The documents show that Odenathus had the title MTQNN' DY MDNH' KLH.[110] MTQNN' could be the equivalent of *Restitutor* (restorer)

103. See A. Stein, *Die Präfekten von Agypten in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (1950), 148–50.

104. See P. J. Parsons, "A Proclamation of Vaballathus?," *Chron. d'Ég.* 42 (1967): 397. See also n. 164 below.

105. Zos. 1, 58.

106. *OGIS* 647 = *IGR* III 1065. On the other hand, the milestone of Vabalathus on the Bostra-Philadelphia road (*AE* 1904, 60) calls him "Im[perator] Caesar" but not "Augustus," and will be a year or two earlier.

107. Perhaps the nearest to concrete evidence available are the two *tesserae* (tokens) of Herodianus and Zenobia which were *probably* found at Antioch, published by H. Seyrig, "Note sur Hérodien, prince de Palmyre," *Syria* 18 (1937): 1. Herodianus should be the Herodes, son of Odenathus, who was killed with his father in 267/8 (*HA*, *Trig. Tyr.* 15–16). But even if the find-spots of the *tesserae* were certain, they are portable objects.

108. See H. Seyrig, "Caractères de l'histoire d'Émèse," *Syria* 36 (1959): 184.

109. See M. Clermont-Ganneau, "Odeinat et Vaballat, rois de Palmyre, et leur titre romain de Corrector," *RB* 29 (1920): 382; Février (n. 88), 99; A. Stein, *Aegyptus* 18 (1938): 234; Schlumberger (n. 88), 42, n. 8.

110. *Inventaire* III 19 (= *CIS* 3946).

just as well as of *Corrector*.[111] The strict equivalent of *Corrector* appears only in an inscription of Vabalathus,[112] where he is called 'PNRTT' DY MDYTH KLH, where 'PNRTT' is certainly a transcription of the Greek *epanorthōtēs*. The two expressions are not necessarily identical in meaning. In any case the expression which follows here—MDYTH—is the equivalent of *polis* or "*provincia*." Even granted that KLH means "whole" or "every," we have still no indication of how wide was the geographical area concerned, still less any justification for assuming an equivalence and translating Odenathus' title as *corrector totius Orientis*. On the contrary, Zosimus, in his detailed and circumstantial narrative, has an anecdote of the Palmyrenes, evidently during their apogee in 270–71, enquiring of Apollo at Seleucia "whether they would obtain the domination of the East."[113]

The literary sources provide no firmer basis for supposing any established Palmyrene hegemony over any of the eastern Roman provinces. Zosimus and Zonaras state no more than that Gallienus gave Odenathus a major military role against Persia.[114] Eutropius and Orosius, for what they are worth on a precise point, imply that Zenobia's wider ambitions post-dated the murder of her husband.[115] In fact, the notion of a general rule of the East by Odenathus depends fundamentally on a number of grandiose generalizations in the *Historia Augusta*[116]—which also states, falsely, that Gallienus awarded him the title "Augustus."[117]

That Palmyra or its rulers exercised any real influence in Antioch before about 270 thus remains a pure speculation unsupported by any reliable concrete evidence. On the other hand, we do have the testimony of Zosimus to the fact that when Aurelian retook Antioch in 272 there was a pro-Palmyrene group there which was preparing to flee in terror until the Emperor issued an

111. See J. Cantineau, "Un *Restitutor Orientis* dans les inscriptions de Palmyre," *Journal Asiatique* 222 (1933): 217.

112. See Clermont-Ganneau (n. 109), 394, 398.

113. Zos. 1, 57, 4.

114. Zos. 1, 39, 1; Zon. 12, 24. Cf. Syncellus, 716 (Bonn.): "He was appointed also commander of the East by Gallienus because of this."

115. Eutropius 9, 13, 2: "Zenobia ruled the East after the murder of her husband Odenathus"; Orosius 7, 23, 4: "Zenobia, who after the murder of her husband claimed possession of Syria for herself"; cf. Festus, *Brev.* 24: "For after her husband's death she held *imperium* over the East under the command of a female."

116. *HA*, *Vit. Gall.* 1, 1: "When Odenathus already obtained *imperium* over the East"; 3, 3: "Odenathus became emperor of nearly the whole East"; 10, 1: "Odenathus king of the Palmyrenes obtained *imperium* over the whole East"; *Trig. Tyr.* 14, 1: "Odenatus, who once already held the East."

117. *HA*, *Vit. Gall.* 12, 1.

edict of amnesty;[118] and, on the other side, Jerome records the name of an apparently Antiochene commander who fought at the battle of Immae against Zenobia.[119] These statements certainly make it reasonable to ask whether the career of a controversial figure in Antioch at this time can be explained in terms of divided political loyalties. Whether this was so in the case of Paul must depend on a detailed examination of the evidence about him.

Paul in Antioch

By far our most reliable and valuable evidence comes from book 7 of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, which gives substantial excerpts from the letter sent by the synod which deposed Paul, addressed to Dionysius, bishop of Rome, and Maximus, bishop of Alexandria. It is noteworthy that both in his own remarks and in his choice of excerpts Eusebius concentrates (conveniently for our purposes) on the externals of Paul's conduct, and is almost entirely silent on the precise heresies as to the nature of Christ of which he was held guilty. For Paul's views—he affirmed the unity of God and the Word (using the term *homoousios*) and denied the divinity of Christ—we have to rely on late reports and quotations of the dialogue between himself and Malchion (see below) at his examination.[120] Eusebius' delicacy on this point can hardly be unrelated to the fact of his own involvement with Arianism;[121] that the historical connection between Paul's doctrines and Arianism has sometimes been denied by modern scholars is less relevant than the fact that it was vigorously asserted by a contemporary, Peter, bishop of Alexandria.[122]

The chronological framework is crucial to our understanding of the career. Firstly, Eusebius (*HE* 7, 27, 1) records the election of Dionysius to succeed the martyred Xystus as bishop of Rome: Xystus was executed on 6 August 258,[123] and Dionysius was consecrated on 22 July 259 or 260.[124] In the

118. Zos. 1, 51, 3.

119. Jer., *Chron.*, ed. Helm, 222: "In this battle Pompeianus, nicknamed Francus, held command against her. His family survives to this day in Antioch. Eugarius, a priest, most dear to us, is a descendant of his."

120. See H. de Riedmatten, *Les Actes du procès de Paul de Samosate; étude sur la Christologie du III^e^ au IV^e^ siècle* (1952).

121. For a survey, D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, *Eusebius of Caesarea* (1960), chap. VI.

122. See the letter of Alexander to his namesake, bishop of Constantinople, Theodoret, *HE* 1, 4, 32–36.

123. Cypr., *Ep.* 80, 1. Cf. L. Duchesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis* I (1955), 155.

124. See Duchesne (n. 123), 157; C. H. Turner, "The Papal Chronology of the Third Century," *J. Th. St.* 17 (1915–16): 338; E. Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums* I (1930), 71–72.

next sentence Eusebius gives the death of the bishop Demetrianus at Antioch, and his succession by Paul; a later legend, too readily believed, relates that Demetrianus was in fact carried into captivity by Shapur.[125] Jerome's *Chronicle* places the election of Paul in 261.[126] Paul's heretical tendencies were evidently not long in showing themselves, for a synod convened to consider them some three or four years later. The approximate date can be confidently established: among the bishops invited was Dionysius of Alexandria, who excused himself on the grounds of age and feebleness, and wrote a letter exposing Paul's errors, but then "at that time [he] died, in the twelfth year of Gallienus" (263/4 or 264/5).[127] There is no reason to doubt that the synod took place in about 264. The upshot of the synod was a promise by Paul, not fulfilled, to abandon his errors.[128]

The date of the decisive synod is more difficult to establish. In *HE* 7, 28, 4, Eusebius records together the death of Gallienus (268), the reign of Claudius, and the accession of Aurelian (270). He then passes on, with the expression "at that [i.e., time]," to the affair of Paul (7, 29, 1). Various converging items of evidence combine, however, to suggest that the synod in fact took place over the winter of 268/9.[129] Jerome's *Chronicle*[130] places the deposition of Paul in the year before the 262nd Olympiad (269), and this date is reflected also in Zonaras, who makes the episode approximately contemporary with the death of Gallienus.[131] In the declaration against Nestorius posted up at Constantinople in 428/9, Eusebius, the later bishop of Dorylaeum, referred to the excommunication of Paul 160 years before[132]—so, if taken precisely, 268/9. The letter of the synod itself contains two clues. It is addressed to Dionysius, bishop of Rome, who died on 26 or 27 December 268.[133] It may be that

125. The tale is given in the Arabic *Chronicle of Seert* (*Patr. Or.* IV, 222–21). See Bardy (n. 8), 241ff., and Downey (n. 9), 309, and M. L. Chaumont, "Les Sassanides et la christianisation de l'Empire iranien au III[e] siècle de notre ère," *Rev. Hist. Rel.* 165 (1964): 165. There is not the slightest reason to prefer such a source to the plain statement of Eusebius.

126. Jerome, *Chron.*, ed. Helm, 220.

127. Euseb., *HE* 7, 27, 2; 28, 3 (cf. 30, 3). For the problem of Gallienus' regnal years, see E. Manni, "Note di epigrafia gallieniana," *Epigraphica* 9 (1947): 113.

128. Euseb., *HE* 7, 30, 4.

129. See Loofs (n. 10), 45ff.; Bardy (n. 8), 296–97.

130. Ed. Helm, 221.

131. Zon. 12, 25.

132. See de Riedmatten (n. 120), 27, 136. For the text, see E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum* I.1.1, para. 18 (p. 101).

133. See O. Bardenwehr, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur* II (1914), 644–45; cf. C. H. Turner (n. 124), 348–49; L. Duchesne (n. 123), 157.

the letter of the synod arrived after his death; for though the surviving letter of his successor, Felix, addressed to Maximus of Alexandria on precisely the point at issue, the divinity of Christ, is generally regarded as an Apollinarist forgery, it may have replaced a genuine original letter.[134] Secondly, the letter refers (30, 5) to the fact that Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, died at Tarsos on his way to Antioch, at a moment when the other participants had arrived and were waiting for him; according to the Greek calendar his death took place on 28 October.[135] The date of the synod can therefore be fixed with considerable precision and with no real room for doubt.

The central element in the view that connects the career of Paul with the wider political history of his time is a passage in Eusebius' quotation of the synodal letter.[136] The bishops state that Paul came from an impoverished family but had made himself rich through extortion in his bishopric—"by means of lawless deeds and sacrilegious plundering and extortions from brethren by threats . . . making the service of God [*theosebeia*] a source of profit." Then comes the key phrase—"he sets his mind on high things and is lifted up, clothing himself in worldly goods and wishing to be called *ducenarius* [see below] rather than bishop." The letter continues by describing the public role to which these aspirations led him—parading across the market-places, reading letters and answering them as he went, with a numerous bodyguard, some marching in front and some behind, so that his pomp and pride made the faith an object of envy and hatred; in meetings of the church he devised various means to impress the simple-minded—"arranging for himself a tribunal [*bēma*] and a high throne . . . and having a *sēkrēton* [audience chamber; see text to n. 152 below] and calling it that, like worldly rulers."

The term *ducenarius* was a well-established expression, deriving from the level of salary, for a high-ranking imperial *procurator*.[137] We find it used in a letter of Cyprian and his fellow bishops to the congregation of Emerita—"proceedings taking place in public before the *procurator ducenarius*."[138] As used in Antioch, it could in normal times only have referred to the *procurator* of

134. See, e.g., A. von Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* I (1893), 659ff.; cf. J. Quasten, *Patrology* II (1953), 242.

135. See Loofs (n. 10), 50; Bardy (n. 8), 297.

136. *HE* 7, 30, 7–9.

137. See H.-G. Pflaum, *Les procurateurs équestres* (1950), 210ff.; and *Les carrières procuratoriennes* (1960–61), 950–51, with F. Millar's review in *JRS* 53 (1963): 197–98 (= "The Equestrian Career under the Empire," chapter 8 in Fergus Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*).

138. Cypr., *Ep.* 67, 6.

the province of Syria Coele.[139] Like the parallel term *centenarius* (a procurator with a salary of 100,000 sesterces per annum),[140] however, it is also attested in use at Palmyra, being one of the many titles of a prominent Palmyrene, Septimius Vorodes.[141] Moreover, but for a crucial textual difficulty, there would be confirmation from Cyprian for the notion that bishops might combine with their office the holding of an imperial procuratorship. In his *On Those Who Lapsed*, 6, Cyprian writes: "The bishops . . . spurning a divine procuratorship, become procurators of worldly kings [so SW; of worldly affairs, R], neglecting their episcopal thrones and deserting the people."

The logic of the passage seems to demand the reading "affairs"; there is nothing else in it which refers in any way to the emperors, and the other activities of the delinquent bishops seem to represent entirely private profiteering. This evidence can therefore not be adduced in support.

Moreover, whatever interpretation is given to the crucial passage of the synodal letter, one thing is clear—namely, that it contains no reference to Palmyra or its rulers. This may now seem hardly surprising for, as we have seen (text to nn. 109–18 above), it was written before the period from which we have any evidence of a Palmyrene military presence in Antioch, and in a period when no other evidence proves a general Palmyrene patronage of the Syrian cities. None the less, the connection with Palmyra, missing in the letter, is duly supplied by later Christian sources. Tabulated in chronological order, they are as follows:[142]

1. Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 71, 1: "Zenobia was a Jew and she patronised Paul of Samosata" (c. 358). (Cf. also the fragment, possibly of Athanasius, in *PG* XXVI, 1293.)
2. Filastrius, *Diversarum haereseon liber*, 36/64 (*CSEL* XXXVIII, 33; *CCL* IX, 244): "He preached that Christ was a just man, not a real God . . . hence he himself also taught Zenobia, at that time a queen [*regina*] in the East, to become a Jew" (385–91).
3. John Chrysostom, *Hom. 8 in Joannem* (*PG* LIX, col. 66): "For not unwittingly, but knowing full well, he transgressed, suffering the same thing as the Jews. For like the latter, who looking to men gave up the soundness of the faith, although on the one hand, knowing that he is the sole begotten son of God, on the other hand, not acknowledging

139. Pflaum, *Carrières* 1082.

140. See Schlumberger (n. 88), 35–38.

141. *OGIS* 645 = *IGR* III, 1043; *OGIS* 646 = *IGR* III, 1045; *IGR* III, 1044; cf. H. Ingholt, "Inscriptions and Sculptures from Palmyra," *Berytus* 3 (1936): 93–95.

142. Cf. Loofs (n. 10), 18; Bardy (n. 8), 81ff.

this because of their rulers, lest they be expelled from the synagogues. In the same way, they say, also this man [i.e., Paul] wishing to ingratiate himself with a certain woman, gave up his own salvation" (391).

4. Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* 2, 8 (*PG* LXXXIII, col. 393): "While Zenobia was ruling that region (for the Persians having defeated the Romans, handed to her the rule over Syria and Phoenicia), he [Paul] drifted into the heresy of Artemon, believing that in this way he would flatter her who believed in what the Jews do" (c. 453).

All of these passages bring in, in one form or another, a tendentious reference to Judaism. This is not surprising, for there was a clear resemblance between Jewish belief and Paul's teaching—and Epiphanius in the *Panarion* (while making no reference to Zenobia) says that the *Paulianistae* differ from the Jews only in not observing the Sabbath or circumcision.[143] On the other hand there is a separate account, apparently not related to the tradition about Paul, of the Judaising tendencies of Zenobia. This appears in some remarks made about Longinus by Photius[144]—"she also converted from her Greek superstition to the customs of the Jews, as an old source writes." Even of this there is very little confirmatory evidence: the Talmud has one anecdote of an appeal by Jewish elders to Zenobia, but the attitude expressed there is otherwise hostile.[145] On the other hand an inscription in Latin from Egypt does show a *regina* and *rex*, evidently Zenobia and Vabalathus, confirming a Ptolemaic grant of right of asylum to a synagogue.[146]

The most extreme version of the story, though the earliest attested, that Zenobia was herself Jewish can be firmly discounted. It is true that we find an indubitably Jewish Zenobius on a Palmyrene inscription of A.D. 212.[147] But the name is common in Palmyra, and a more probable candidate for relationship to Zenobia would be the Iulius Aurelius Zenobius whom we find exercising important functions during the visit of Severus Alexander in 231.[148] Jewish sources show no awareness that Zenobia was Jewish, and

143. Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 65, 2, 5.

144. Photius, *Bib*. 265, ed. Bekker, 492 (see n. 56 above).

145. Jerusalem Talmud, *Terumoth* 8:12 (trans. Schwab., III, 107). See J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia* II: *The Early Sasanian Period* (1966), 51.

146. *OGIS* 129 = *ILS* 574 = *Corp. Ins. Jud*. 1449 = E. Gabba, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della bibbia* (1958), no. 8.

147. Frey, *Corp. Ins. Jud*. II, no. 820.

148. *OGIS* 640 = *IGR* III 1033; cf. *PIR*^{2} I, 196. It is not a fatal objection to this possibility that Zenobia is found with the *nomen* "Septimia," for this is not attested for Palmyrenes,

the possibility is of course incompatible with the much better attested claim that she had leanings towards Judaism. This in its turn, though it has little positive support (see above), is not impossible. There is fairly substantial evidence for a Jewish community in Palmyra.[149] Her possible favour to Judaism combined with the nature of Paul's doctrines *may* explain how the story of their connection arose. But we can also discount the version of Theodoret and Chrysostom, that the desire to please Zenobia was the *cause* of Paul's lapse into heresy. Paul was already accused of heresy in about 264, Zenobia only became prominent (so far as we know) after the death of her husband in 267/8, and the Palmyrenes perhaps entered Antioch only in 270. At the most then, her patronage of Paul may have begun in the period after the synod, when Paul clung on obstinately in the church house.[150] We cannot actually disprove the third version of the story, that of Filastrius, that Paul influenced Zenobia in the direction of Judaism.

What then of Paul's procuratorship? A closer look will show it to be a fantasy. The whole sense of the passage in the synodal letter is that Paul as bishop modelled his style and public appearances after those of imperial officials—"*wishing to be called ducenarius* rather than bishop," "*arranging for himself* a tribunal and high throne" (probably modelled on a governor's tribunal and seat, though even normal bishops had something of the sort),[151] "having a *secretum*, and *calling it that*, like worldly rulers" (the reference must be to what is normally called the *secretarium* of a governor, the audience chamber where a number of attested trials of martyrs took place).[152] Everything that is said of the improper activities of Paul relates to the life of the Christian congregation—extorting money from *the brethren*, making the *service of God* a source of profit, organizing spectacles *in the assemblies of the church*, insulting

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other than the family of Odenathus, until the 260s; see Schlumberger, *Bull. d'Ét. Or.* 9 (1942–43): 59.

149. See E. Peterson, *ΕΙΣ ΘΕΟΣ* (1926), 24–25; Frey, *Corp. Ins. Jud.* II, pp. 65–73.

150. So, in effect, Loofs (n. 10), 34.

151. Both *thronos* and *bēma* are attested for both civil and ecclesiastical authorities; see E. Stommel, "Bischofsstuhl und Hoher Thron," *Jahrb. f. Ant. u. Chr.* 1 (1958): 52. And note that very similar *podia* are found at Dura in the Christian building and in the palace of the *Dux*; see C. H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report* VIII, 2: *The Christian Building* (1967), 142–45. But note L. Robert, *Hellenica* IV (1945), 42–43, on the theme of the governor's *thronos* and *bēma* in Greek epigrams.

152. Note the trial of the Scillitan martyrs, "in the *secretarium*, in Carthage"; of Crispina "in the colony of Thebestina, in the *secretarium*, when Anulinus the proconsul was (holding court) at the tribunal"; of Cyprian, "Carthagine in secretario," R. Knopf, G. Krüger, and G. Ruhbach, *Ausgewählte Martyrakten*[4] (1965), 28, 62, 109. Cf. *RE*, s.v. "Secretarium."

those who received his words without excessive enthusiasm *as was fitting in a house of God*. The worthy bishops would have been surprised to know how long and undeserved a life their words have given to "Paul of Samosata, the *ducenarius* of Zenobia."

The Appeal to Aurelian

The political history of his time will therefore explain neither the rise of Paul of Samosata nor his formal deposition. Whether it helps to explain his refusal to leave the church house and his opponents' successful appeal to Aurelian, it is more difficult to say. At first sight it seems an obvious supposition that he clung on until Aurelian entered Antioch in 272, whereupon the loyalist party petitioned the Emperor and had him ejected; as was mentioned above (text to n. 118), we even know that there were then Palmyrene supporters in the city, whose fears Aurelian had to still, and also loyalists who aided the Roman forces.

But it must be noted that there are three separate problems here. The first concerns the motivation of the appeal to the Emperor; almost all that has been written about this episode has assumed almost unconsciously that only exceptional circumstances—or, more precisely, an immediate political situation such as that imagined here—would serve to explain how such an appeal could have been made. Secondly, there is the question of chronology; how and when did the appeal reach Aurelian, who assumed power probably in the summer of 270 and did not reach Antioch until 272? Thirdly, there is the favourable response by Aurelian, and the remarkable terms in which it was expressed. The first thing is to set out the brief couple of sentences of Eusebius (7, 30, 19) which are our sole evidence for these proceedings. After concluding his extracts from the synodal letter, and mentioning the deposition of Paul and the election in his place of Domnus, Eusebius continues:

> But as Paul refused on any account to give up possession of the house of the church, the emperor Aurelian on being petitioned, gave an extremely just decision regarding the matter, ordering the assignment of the house to those with whom the bishops of the doctrine in Italy and Rome would communicate in writing. Thus, then, was the aforesaid man driven with the utmost indignity from the church by the ruler of the world. (based on the Loeb translation)

Even the most immediate character of the situation is not easy to grasp. What was "the house of the church"? We can suppose that it bore some resem-

blance to the private house at Dura-Europos, converted for use in Christian services.[153] Moreover, there is no doubt that by the end of the third century Christian communities generally possessed a regular meeting place, variously called *oikos ekklēsias*, *kyriakon*, or *proseuktērion*. There does not appear, however, to be good evidence from this period that it was ever combined with an actual episcopal residence.[154] One must suppose rather that Paul continued to perform services there, perhaps with the support of a part of the congregation.

Hence the appeal to the Emperor. It is crucial to our understanding of both the Roman Empire, and of the place of the church within it, to realize that we do not *have* to find exceptional political circumstances to explain recourse to the emperor as arbiter. For an immense mass of evidence shows us that individuals and communities saw the giving of justice as a primary function of the emperor, just as they had of the Hellenistic monarchs who preceded them.[155] Even if we confine ourselves to Syrian evidence alone, we may note, firstly, the inscription which contains a series of appeals to rulers from the temple community of Baetocaece, stretching from probably the third century B.C. to A.D. 258/9.[156] Then we have the words of an orator addressing Caracalla in Antioch in 27 May 216, on the subject of the priesthood of the temple at Dmeir: "There is a famous temple of Zeus among them, famous indeed among all the people of the area . . . they frequent it and conduct processions to it. The first wrong done by our adversary . . . he benefits from freedom from [taxation and?] liturgies, wears a gold crown, [enjoys precedence?], wields a sceptre and has proclaimed himself priest of

153. See C. H. Kraeling (n. 151), esp. 127ff., "The Christian Building at Dura, and Early Church Architecture"; cf. R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (1965), chap. I. Compare R. L. P. Milburn, "*O THΣ EKKΛHΣIAΣ OIKOΣ*," *J. Th. St.* 46 (1945): 65, and Chr. Mohrmann, "Les dénominations de l'église en tant qu'édifice en grec et en latin au cours des premiers siècles chrétiens," *Rev. Sci. Rel.* 36 (1962): supp. 155, esp. 158–59.

154. Though, for instance, Lebreton and Zeiller (n. 12), 349, use the term "maison épiscopale." Kraeling (n. 151), 128 and 134, does not seem to me to offer concrete evidence for the residence of presbyters in *domus ecclesiae*.

155. See F. Millar, "The Emperor, the Senate, and the Provinces," *JRS* 56 (1966): 156 (= chapter 11 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* I: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*; "Emperors at Work," *JRS* 57 (1967): 9 (= chapter 1 of F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*; *The Roman Empire and Its Neighbours* (1967), 42–43, 75–80.

156. *OGIS* 262 = Abbott and Johnson, *Municipal Administration*, no. 147; cf. F. Millar, *CR*, n.s., 18 (1968): 264, which requires correction in the light of H. Seyrig, "Aradus et Baetocaecé," *Syria* 28 (1951): 191. The document is now re-edited as *IGLS* IV, 4028.

Zeus. How he gained such a privilege I shall show."[157] The close resemblance to what will have been said to Aurelian about Paul of Samosata needs no stressing. It does not follow of itself that a Christian community could have come easily to make such a claim before a pagan emperor. But the groundwork for such an advance had in fact long been prepared. For just about a century before the case of Paul arose, we find Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, discussing the Christian view of the emperor.[158] Why do the Christians not worship the emperor? Because he is not a god, but a man, appointed by God, not to receive homage, but to give judgment rightly.

It must be remembered that Gallienus' edict of toleration was by now about a decade old. There was on the face of it nothing to stop the increasingly settled and well-established church from taking its place with other institutions in the life of the Empire. The moral had indeed been drawn immediately after the edict. For Eusebius reproduces a rescript (*antigraphē*) of Gallienus, written in answer to a request from the bishops of Egypt for recovery of church property there; in the same paragraph he mentions what was evidently another rescript to a different group of local bishops concerning the recovery of Christian cemeteries.[159]

It was therefore only a relatively small further step that the congregation of Antioch should address themselves to the Emperor for help in recovering their church house from an impudent heretic. To do so they did not necessarily have to wait until the Emperor was in the locality. We have no reason to think that Gallienus ever visited Egypt, and the likelihood is that the Eygptian churches—like innumerable associations or cities before them—sent a delegation to him.

What then was the sequence of events leading to the deposition of Paul? Nothing in the admittedly extremely brief narrative of Eusebius prepares us for the possibility that a period of three and a half years passed, with Paul in illegal possession of the church house until Aurelian arrived in person in Antioch. Moreover, Eusebius mentions the succession of Timaeus to Domnus, Paul's successor, as bishop of Antioch, quite separately from the affair of Paul—and Jerome puts Timaeus' consecration precisely in 272, and before the reconquest by Aurelian, which he puts in 273.[160] So it is equally possible

157. P. Roussel and F. de Visscher, "Les inscriptions du temple de Dmeir," *Syria* 23 (1942–43): 173; W. Kunkel "Der Prozess der Gohariener vor Caracalla," in *Festschrift H. Lewald* (1953), 81; *SEG* XVII 759. On the lines in question (38–43), see N. Lewis, "Cognitio Caracallae de Goharienis: Two Textual Restorations," *TAPhA* 99 (1968): 255.

158. Theophilus, *Ad Autolycum* 1, II.

159. *HE* 7, 13.

160. *HE* 7, 32, 2; Jerome, *Chron.*, ed. Helm, 222.

that after the conclusion of the synod—whose letter was written, at the latest, before news of the death of Dionysius of Rome in December 268 had arrived, and possibly as early as November of that year (see text to n. 133 above)—the Antiochene congregation responded more urgently to Paul's obduracy, and, perhaps some time in 269, despatched a delegation to the Emperor.

The evidence of the early Constantinian period suggests that it normally took several months from the issuing of an imperial reply to its arrival in a provincial city.[161] Similarly, though here our information is less precise, it will have taken a comparable period for a delegation to reach the emperor wherever he happened to be, to gain an audience, and to receive an answer.[162] These were, it hardly needs to be said, troubled times. Claudius was mainly engaged in combating barbarian invasions in central and eastern Europe up to the moment of his death at Sirmium, which certainly took place later than 10 December 269,[163] and seems now not to have been until summer, 270.[164] It would not be in the least surprising if, for one reason or another, no imperial reply was forthcoming until given by Aurelian; the occasion could have been any moment from the very beginning of his reign onwards.

161. *Cod. Just.* 1, 21, 2; 3, 24, 1; 7, 62, 12; 9, 40, 2; 12, 61, 1. For reasons which remain obscure, all these rescripts, to which the dates of *propositio* (posting up) at the *comitatus* (the emperor's court) and acceptance by the city concerned are attached, date from the decade 310–20.

162. Though where our sources give some indication of the time spent on embassies, it tends to be in exceptional cases. But note, e.g., Jos., *Ant.* 18, 170–71—deliberate delay by Tiberius; Philo. *Leg.* 29/285—Jewish Alexandrian embassy waiting for an audience with Gaius; Pliny, *Pan.* 79, 6–7.

163. Clandius' third *trib[unicia] pot[estas]* is clearly attested, *CIL* II 1672; III 3521 = *ILS* 570. See L. Bivona, "Per la cronologia di Aureliano," *Epigraphica* 28 (1966): 106; as Bivona points out (121), this essential datum is missing from J. Lafaurie, "La chronologie impériale de 249 à 285," *Bull. Soc. Nat. Ant. France* (1965): 139; for the evidence on Claudius' activities, see P. Damerau, *Kaiser Claudius II Goticus, Klio*, Beih. XXXIII, n.f., 20 (1934).

164. See J. Rea, "The Chronology" (of the Corn Dole Archive, *P. Oxy.* 2892–2940) published in *P. Oxy.* XL (1972), pp. 15–30, which the author was kind enough to show me before publication. The scheme which emerges is as follows: (1) Claudius survived until shortly before the end of his second Egyptian regnal year (269/70); (2) Quintillus is attested on Alexandrian coins but no known papyri are dated by him; (3) the third year of Claudius is attested on coins and papyri, suggesting that the news of his death had not yet spread—270/1 is therefore Quintillus I (coins), Claudius 3, and also (from December) Aurelian I/Vabalathus 4; (4) subsequently Aurelian re-numbered his Egyptian regnal years to date from the death of Claudius, so making 269/70 Aurelian I; (5) Egypt seems to have been recovered in the summer of 272.

Even if, therefore, we suppose that the reply was not given in the context of the reconquest of 272, would it not still have been influenced by political considerations? It is certainly very difficult, but not absolutely impossible (text to n. 99 above), to argue that it could have been given by Aurelian in ignorance of the Palmyrene occupation of Syria. None the less, it is notable that the indication given by Eusebius of its terms contains no reference to Palmyra. It is possible to *interpret* the description of the orthodox party—"those with whom the bishops of Rome and Italy were in communication"—as a veiled reference to their loyalty to Rome. But it cannot be emphasised too strongly that, *as it stands*, the definition is strictly ecclesiastical. How then did Aurelian arrive at this remarkable formulation? Two hypotheses, not incompatible, are possible. The first is that it is quite evident from a number of examples of imperial letters that emperors in formulating a response very often took the passive course of following closely the wording of the request presented to them.[165] Thus Aurelian may well have taken over a description which the orthodox party gave to themselves. The second is that, whether or not the delegation was finally heard in Italy, or Rome itself, it may have been actively supported by bishops from there. For what it is worth, Zosimus, our only more or less coherent narrative source, shows Aurelian setting out from Rome at the beginning of his reign, going to Aquileia, then to Pannonia, and subsequently returning to Italy.[166] The delegation from Antioch could well have obtained a hearing somewhere in Italy before or after these campaigns.

All this, however, remains a hypothesis. Aurelian's decision *may* well not have come until 272, and in either case the formulation of it *may* have related to divisions in the Antiochene church, which themselves reflected political allegiance to Rome or to Palmyra. All that can be asserted is that, if we set what we are actually told by someone relatively close to the event against the wider background of what we know of the nature of the Roman Empire, then we do not need an explanation in terms of contemporary politics for either the appeal to Aurelian or his reply. The relevance of these considerations to the early contacts of the church and Constantine need not be stressed.

165. The parallel case of the repetition by the emperor of the wording of the original letter when replying to a provincial governor is patent in the case of Pliny and Trajan; see A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (1966), 537ff. For letters in reply to city embassies, see F. Millar, *The Roman Empire and Its Neighbours* (n. 155), 76.

166. Zos. 1, 48–49. See Alföldi (n. 100).

Paul's Heresy and Local Culture?

As so often, the effect of examining and dismissing large-scale assumptions which have been too hastily accepted is only to replace them with more precise doubts and questions. For all that is argued above, can we really be sure that the story of Paul does not reveal the suppression of a strain of local belief and liturgical practice by the prevailing orthodoxy of the Greek church? We must note, for instance, that among his opponents were men of established reputation in contemporary pagan Greek culture. His principal Antiochene opponent, the presbyter Malchion, was a learned man who was (apparently) the chief teacher of rhetoric at Antioch;[167] while among those who came to Antioch to examine his case was Anatolius from Alexandria, a student of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, physics, and rhetoric, who was successively head of the Aristotelian school at Alexandria and bishop of Laodicea.[168]

On the other side, the resemblance between Paul's view of Christ and Jewish belief was (as noted above, text to nn. 147–50) unmistakable. We cannot *prove* that Paul was not influenced by members of the substantial Jewish community in Antioch;[169] the example of Origen at Caesarea shows that learned discussions between Jews and Christians were still possible.[170] It may be noted that two Antiochene Christians of the generation after Paul, the presbyter Dorotheus[171] and the important theologian and biblical scholar, Lucian of Antioch,[172] are both attested as having had a profound knowledge of Hebrew. But whatever was said in later Christian literature about the Judaising tendencies of Paul or his followers, this particular line of attack was not used, so far as we know, by his contemporaries. On the contrary, they clearly regarded his heresy as a revival of that of Artemon (or Artemas);[173] of the latter

167. If that is what is meant by the puzzling phrase of Ensebius, *HE* 7, 29, 2, "who stood at the head of a school of rhetoric, one of the Greek educational establishments at Antioch" (Loeb translation). Note M. Richard, "Malchion et Paul de Samosate: le témoignage d'Eusèbe de Césarée," *Eph. Theol. Lovanienses* 35 (1959): 325.

168. *HE* 7, 32, 6, 21.

169. See C. H. Kraeling, "The Jewish Community at Antioch," *Journ. Bib. Lit.* 51 (1932): 130.

170. See, e.g., M. Simon, *Verus Israel*[2] (1964), 235; H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (1953), 41.

171. Euseb., *HE* 7, 32, 2–4.

172. Suda, s.v. *Loukianos*. See G. Bardy, *Recherches sur Saint Lucien d'Antioche et son école* (1936), 43ff., 164ff.

173. *HE* 7, 30, 16–17 (two extracts from the synodal letter); cf. Pamphilus, *Apologia pro Origene* 5 (*PG* XVII, 578–79); Theodoret, *Haer. Fab. comp.* II, 4 (*PG* LXXXIII, 389).

nothing is known, though a phrase in the synodal letter appears to imply that he was still alive. What is clear is that the Adoptianist heresy here referred to is (rather obscurely) described by Eusebius as having originated in Rome in the late second century under the impulse of one Theodotus of Byzantium.[174] If there is a "local" element in the nature of Paul's heresy, it is rather, perhaps, to be found in its resemblance to that of Beryllus of Bostra, who thought that Christ did not pre-exist his birth and had no divinity except that of the Father dwelling in him—and was duly corrected by an assembly of bishops, assisted by Origen, in about 238–44.[175]

Some claims for a local origin can be advanced for some of the innovations of Paul in liturgy and church practise. The synodal letter speaks of "the females introduced into his house, as the Antiochians call them";[176] the reference is to *virgines subintroductae*, that is (in theory), women living with priests without sexual relations. It is sometimes suggested that this was a distinctively Syrian form of asceticism.[177] But the practice, with its associated scandals, is clearly attested a few years earlier in Africa.[178] Paul also had a chorus of women who sang psalms specially composed in honour of himself—and were alleged to proclaim that he was in fact an angel who had descended from heaven.[179] Here one can only note, for lack of detail in the account of Paul, that other evidence indicates a particularly rich tradition of hymn composition in Syriac, beginning with Bardesanes and his son Harmonius (see text to nn. 28–33 above), and the hymns incorporated in the *Acts of Thomas*.[180] It is at least a reasonable speculation that Paul's compositions were related to this tradition.

These indications of specifically Syrian deviations in the belief and practice of Paul of Samosata are no more than hints (though often claimed as

174. *HE* 5, 28.

175. *HE* 6, 33; the connection is indicated by J. Daniélou and H. Marrou (n. 12), 253. For the documentary record of the confutation by Origen of another local heresy, almost certainly Arabian also, see J. Scherer, *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide* (1960).

176. *HE* 7, 30, 12.

177. See A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* I (1958), 79.

178. See Cypr., *Ep.* 4.

179. *HE* 7, 30, 10–11.

180. See I.-M. Dalmais, "L'apport des églises Syriennes à l'hymnographie chrétienne," *Orient Syrien* 2 (1957): 243. Note the significant generalisation (made without reference to Paul), 247: "la grande Église doit s'être toujours défiée des chants aussi capiteux, trop éloignées de cette 'sobre ivresse' et de cette réserve qui furent toujours siennes. . . . Au cours du III[e] siècle une nette réaction se fait sentir en faveur de l'emploi exclusif des psaumes et des cantiques scriptuaires."

something more definite than that).[181] But they may serve to remind us of just how little we really understand. We can define some of the elements in the endlessly complex culture of the Fertile Crescent in the Roman period, and accept the impossibility of making simple deductions from culture to political attitudes; we can confidently dismiss from the history books the monstrous figure of "Paul of Samosata, the *ducenarius* of Zenobia"; we can see that we do not necessarily need to look to the expansion of Palmyrene power in order to explain why the orthodox party in Antioch could appeal to a pagan emperor. But we still are a long way from understanding the nature of the wider Aramaic-Greek culture of Syria and Mesopotamia, and how it affected the attitudes and beliefs of those who grew up in it.

181. See J. Daniélou and H. Marrou (n. 12), 252: "Il est typiquement oriental. On trouve chez lui les usages de la Syrie de l'est."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Caravan Cities: The Roman Near East and Long-Distance Trade by Land[*]

My title, "Caravan Cities," is intended to recall the evocative book by Rostovtzeff, published in 1932.[1] In it he gave a vivid sketch of some of the wonderful remains to be seen then—and to be seen even better now—in the huge area of the Near East ruled by Rome: Petra and Gerasa (Jerash) in Jordan; Palmyra in the desert and Dura-Europos on the Euphrates, both in Syria. To say that these were "caravan cities" is to say something more than merely that trade passed through them. It is to say that they owed their character *as* cities to trade: not to local exchanges of products, but to long-distance trade, to caravans. Given the overtones of the word "caravan," there is a rather strong implication that we are talking about camel trains, travelling vast distances over the desert.

In the case of Palmyra in particular, there has been a tendency to think of such cities, quite explicitly, as having been like ports; hence Javier Teixidor's book of 1984 called the city "un port romain du désert," while Ernest Will's of 1992 was subtitled "La Venise des sables."[2] Given the keen interest with which we await Geoffrey Rickman's study of Roman ports, it seemed appropriate to use the analogy expressed in these titles and to ask how far it

[*] First published in M. Austin, J. Harries, and C. Smith, eds., *Modus Operandi: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Rickman* (BICS supp. 71, 1998), 119–37. An earlier version of this paper was the subject of the Fourth Annual W. Kendrick Pritchett Lecture at Berkeley, which I had the honour to give in April 1992.

1. M. I. Rostovtzeff, *Caravan Cities*, trans. D. Talbot Rice and T. Talbot Rice (1932).

2. J. Teixidor, *Un port romain du désert. Palmyre et son commerce d'Auguste à Caracalla* (Semitica 34, 1984); E. Will, *Les Palmyréniens. La Venise des Sables* (1992).

is justifiable to see any of the cities of the Near Eastern provinces as having been like ports, functioning as centres for long-distance overland trade with the Asian land-mass.

As will become clear below, there are immense problems in the evidence, and many questions which we would like to answer will remain unanswered. But we do have one absolutely secure starting point, namely the incontrovertible evidence provided by the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Voyage around the Red Sea) as regards long-distance trade by sea in the zone represented by the Red Sea, the east coast of Africa, the northern coasts of the Indian Ocean, and the west coast of India. This highly evocative Greek text, written between A.D. 40 and 70, and excellently edited by Lionel Casson,[3] provides just what we do not know, or hardly know, of land trade with Asia: the various different routes of exchange, the political relations involved, and above all detailed accounts of the *objects* of trade. But it does none the less serve to validate the starting point of this essay, simply by confirming that long-distance trade, as an organised, conscious activity, was a feature of the society and economy of the Roman imperial period.

It would of course be very helpful if we had available any comparable work on trade by land. In fact we do not, though the *Parthian Stations* of Isidorus of Charax, apparently dating to around the turn of the eras, has sometimes been interpreted as if it were. Indeed in his invaluable edition and translation of 1914, W. H. Schoff sub-titled his book "an account of the overland trade route between the Levant and India in the first century B.C."[4] As we will see, the work is indeed relevant for an understanding of trade routes. But in reality the focus of interest of the author is not social or economic, but political and military. The work begins with the crossing of the Euphrates at Zeugma, in an easterly direction, and hence (implicitly) with entry into Parthian territory, and it ends with Alexandropolis, the metropolis of Arachosia: "as far as this the land is under the rule of the Parthians."

The itinerary traversed thus comes nowhere near India, ending instead where Parthian rule stopped in central Asia. In between, the author's interest is focused on local political formations, and in particular on the question of whether a place was a Greek foundation, or counted as a Greek city. Hence we find here one of the very few literary references to Dura-Europos: "next is

3. L. Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei: Text with Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (1989).

4. Text of the *Σταθμοὶ Παρθυκοί* in C. Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores* I (1861), 244ff.; Jacoby, *FGrH*, no. 781; see esp. W. H. Schoff, *Parthian Stations of Isidorus of Charax: An Account of the Overland Trade between the Levant and India in the First Century B.C.* (1914).

Doura of Nicanor, a foundation of Macedonians, but (which) is called by the Greeks Europos." Just before this, Isidorus has revealed what sort of travellers his work really concerns. Speaking of the confluence of the Chabur and the Euphrates, he says, "from this point the forces cross over to the Roman side." It is probable, though nowhere made explicit, that Isidorus is thinking of a Roman army invading, rather than of Parthian troops in transit. However, either interpretation is possible.

The first part of the itinerary involved has been excellently discussed by Chaumont and Gawlikowski;[5] this section went across the Euphrates, continued to the Balikh and then went down this river to the Euphrates, crossing over at the confluence with the Chabur, and continuing along the river as far as the King's Canal and the traverse across to Seleucia on the Tigris.

After that, the route took the traveller up through the Zagros Mountains to Media, Margiana, and finally Alexandropolis. The terminal point is not India, but Alexandropolis, which, as is argued by Fraser in his study of Alexander's city foundations, can be identified with Kandahar in Afghanistan.[6] It should be stressed also, however, that this city equally does not lie on any supposed line of a "Silk Road" carrying trade between the Mediterranean area and China; on any reconstruction such a route would have run well to the north.[7]

The *Parthian Stations*, in short, is not in any simple sense evidence about *trade routes* at all, still less about the legendary Silk Road. Whether there is indeed evidence for any such route will be touched on briefly below. For the problem of the possible role of cities lying in the Roman provinces, it is enough for the moment to take the hint that any traveller going eastwards might first travel south-eastwards, to the area where the Euphrates and Tigris come closest. In which direction trade then typically ran, whether north-eastwards to Media or further south-eastwards to the head of the Gulf, remains to be discussed.

The absence of any true parallel to the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, giving an account of long-distance land trade, is a serious handicap. Any such account

5. M. L. Chaumont, "Etudes d'histoire parthe. V. La route royale des Parthes de Zeugma à Séleucie du Tigre d'après l'Itinéraire d'Isidore de Charax," *Syria* 61 (1984): 63–107; M. Gawlikowski, "La route de l'Euphrate d'Isidore à Julien," in P. L. Gatier, B. Helly, and J.-P. Rey-Coquais, eds., *Géographie historique au Proche Orient (Syrie, Phénicie, Arabie, grecques, romaines, byzantines)* (1988), 77–98.

6. P. M. Fraser, *Cities of Alexander the Great* (1996), 132–40.

7. For maps of possible routes of the "Silk Road," see, e.g., H. W. Haussig, *Die Geschichte Zentralasiens und der Seidenstrasse in vorislamischer Zeit* (1983), end maps; R. Stoneman, *Palmyra and Its Empire* (1992), 41. See also n. 60 below.

would have been invaluable, whether it concerned the northern crossing of the Euphrates at Zeugma, or that further south via Beroea and Hierapolis, or that traversing the Syrian steppe to Palmyra and then to the Euphrates; or possibly, much further south, that from Bostra via the Wadi Sirhan to Dumatha and then the gulf, or that from Gaza or Petra to the Hedjaz and south to the Yemen. As we will see, there is some explicit evidence, from a variety of sources, for all these routes. But between them these scattered allusions still leave two enormous problems. Firstly—unlike the *Periplus*—they say extraordinarily little about what was actually carried, and what the objects of long-distance trade were. Secondly, they leave open the question of the importance of long-distance trade in the life of any of the cities concerned: were any of them in fact "caravan" cities?

If the answer is difficult everywhere else, surely it ought at least to be easy in the case of Palmyra, lying away out in the steppe between Emesa or Damascus and the Euphrates. Its position seems to mean that we have no option but to conceive of it as a caravan city. As we will see, Appian, writing in the middle of the second century, duly ascribes to it a central role in the trade between the Roman and Parthian empires. But, quite apart from that, we have a long series of inscriptions—local documents from Palmyra and its region, in Greek and Palmyrene (a dialect of Aramaic)—which refer to the caravan trade. These inscriptions stretch from A.D. 19 to the 260s. What more do we want? In fact we have some more, namely the vast tax law of A.D. 137, also inscribed in Greek and Palmyrene, and giving details of the tolls on goods coming into the city. But both of these bodies of evidence prove, when looked at more closely, to be somewhat deceptive.

There is a wider problem, however, indeed what seems to be a profound contradiction between what ancient sources suggest, and what modern theory dictates. By "modern theory" I mean above all Moses Finley's *The Ancient Economy*.[8] The lessons of this book, as need hardly be said, were profound. To summarise grossly, Finley argued that neither trade as an activity nor traders as a class ever represented a dominant factor in the life of any ancient community. A political community might *regulate* trade, protect it, or tax it: it might also seek access to raw materials, or supplies, especially grain. But it did not have the promotion of its own trade—the search for markets for the products of its economy—as an objective. Trade was, to use an over-used phrase once again, "embedded" in a wider political structure.

One very problematic side-effect of the presentation of this sweeping hypothesis—which is in broad terms correct—was an anti-empirical tendency,

8. M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*[2] (1985).

that is, a disposition to take any one item of evidence, especially archaeological evidence demonstrating the movement of goods, and then reject it as not proving enough. By rejecting each item separately, Finley did come rather close to guaranteeing the impregnability of his main hypothesis. For if no item of concrete evidence were allowed to mean much, no *accumulation* of unexpected or unfamiliar items of empirical evidence could ever occur. Consequently, one could never be led by the accumulation of empirical evidence into revising one's initial hypothesis.

In the course of talking about the "ancient economy," by which he meant the economic characteristics of the Graeco-Roman world, Finley did not say a great deal about the eastern trade of the Roman Empire. It is significant that the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* is never referred to. When trade with Asia is mentioned, it is in sweeping terms: "To be meaningful, 'world market,' 'a single economic unit' must embrace something considerably more than the exchange of some goods over long distances; otherwise China, Indonesia, the Malay Peninsula and India were also part of the same unit and world market. One must show the existence of interlocking behaviours and responses over wide areas" (34). Certainly, *if* only some notion of a "world market" or "single economic unit" will allow us to attribute *any* importance to long-distance trade, we shall have to give up at once. For, given the restricted means of transport, and the non-existence of credit-transfer systems, operating at a distance, without cash, it is inconceivable that long-distance trade could have had, overall, anything like the importance which would have produced world-wide rhythms of boom or recession of the sort familiar today. But that is hardly a reasonable requirement. What we need to ask is two more modest questions. Firstly, did people perceive long-distance trade with the East as an important phenomenon? Even Finley could not properly deny that this would be a significant question: for on the very same page he states that his justification for speaking of "the ancient economy" lies in its "common cultural-psychological framework"—or, in other words (to put it crudely), what people say in those ancient texts which happen to have survived. Secondly, long-distance trade, whose actual existence cannot possibly be denied, *might* have been sufficiently important to give a different character to certain places: in short to have produced, exceptionally, some "caravan cities." Oddly enough, the *Ancient Economy* makes only one passing allusion to Palmyra, and then brushes it aside as an exception: "exceptional cities, such as . . . the caravan-city of Palmyra" (59). But in fact, as will be seen, Palmyra conformed rather better to his own model than he himself recognised.

If one is going to reject an approach based on the accumulation and analysis of concrete items of evidence, and look instead for a "common cultural-

psychological framework," one must then take seriously what the ancient sources say. For what they (along with epigraphic evidence and iconography) say *is* our means of access to "the common cultural-psychological framework." But Finley wants, indeed needs, to have it both ways. Take for instance what he says about the two passages of Pliny the Elder which reflect concern about the expense of Roman trade with the East: "The famous passages in the elder Pliny (*Natural History* 6, 101; 12, 84) giving dubious figures of the drain of Roman gold and silver to India and other eastern countries in payment for luxuries are moral in their implication" (132). But, firstly, moral concerns *are* part of the "cultural-psychological framework"; and, secondly, moralising implications do not automatically deprive reports of all factual content. What does Pliny the Elder, writing in the 70s of the first century, actually say?

The first passage (*NH* 6, 101) refers, like the *Periplus*, to the *sea* trade between Egypt and India. Each year, Pliny says, no less than 50 million sesterces was drained off by India, which sent back goods sold at 100 times their original value. The focus of the second passage (*NH* 12, 84) is the same: the luxury trade with India, China, and the Arabian peninsula cost not less than 100 million sesterces per year. There is simply no way of knowing whether the figures are "dubious" or not. Both passages are indeed alarmist, or moralising: but neither in fact mentions anything about gold or silver, each giving the alleged values in terms of sesterces. None the less, we cannot simply brush them aside. However curious its concerns may seem to us, Pliny's *Natural History* is the most intense exploration of man's relation to his physical environment, in the widest sense, known to us from antiquity.[9] If he expresses concern about the cost of luxury trade with the East, then the existence of this luxury trade was known in Rome—it was not in other words a merely local phenomenon—and it was felt to be an issue of some importance.

It may none the less be significant that in Pliny's eyes it was the *sea* trade which was the significant factor. It is surely striking that when he first refers to Palmyra he emphasises the richness of its soil and its water supply, and (rather misleadingly) its position as balancing politically between the Parthian and Roman empires (*NH* 6, 188); in fact—as has long been clear—it had been firmly in the Roman sphere at least since the reign of Tiberius. Pliny does go on immediately to give the distances from Palmyra: 337 Roman miles to Seleucia "of the Parthians," 203 to the nearest point on the Syrian

9. For Pliny, see the excellent study by M. Beagon, *Roman Nature: The Thought of Pliny the Elder* (1992).

coast (a significant point, as we will see below), and 23 less than that to Damascus (which raises the question of whether Damascus was in any sense a caravan city). In fact, however, even in this context, Pliny makes no reference to trade.

The question of how ancient writers speak about long-distance trade remains, however inadequate their accounts are, of central importance. To review what we know, I would like to begin in the South, with routes through Arabia, then go to the North, to the Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia; and finally come to the only area which presents a mass of local, documentary evidence, namely Palmyra and the Euphrates.

There is a good reason for beginning in the extreme South, for it is here that Pliny gives the most concrete and detailed available account of any long-distance trade route by land. What Pliny is describing is a route running north along the east side of the Red Sea, starting from Thomna (or Thumna) in the territory of the Gebbanitae (present-day Yemen) and going all the way to Gaza on the Mediterranean coast. This is what he says:

> It (*i.e.* Frankincense) can only be exported through the country of the Gebbanitae, and accordingly a tax is paid on it to the king of that people as well. Their capital is Thomna, which is 1487½ miles distant from the town of Gaza in Judaea on the Mediterranean coast; the journey is divided into 65 stages with halts for camels. Fixed portions of the frankincense are also given to the priests and the king's secretaries, but beside these the guards and their attendants and the gate-keepers and servants also have their pickings: indeed all along the route they keep on paying, at one place for water, at another for fodder, or the charges for lodging at the halts, and the various tolls; so that expenses mount up to 688 *denarii* per camel before the Mediterranean coast is reached; and then again payment is made to the customs officers of our Empire.[10]

Pliny is being quite up to date, for Gaza had probably become a part of the province of Judaea only after the Jewish War, which had ended in 70.[11] What he says about the total distances is in truth unreliable, for the manuscripts vary. But we know the distance, as the crow flies, anyway: it is approximately 1,300 miles. If Pliny has indicated the number of stages correctly, each of the 65 stages will have covered on average 20 miles, not allowing for deviations.

What is crucial is the indication that the goods were carried on camels,

10. *NH* 12.32/63–65, Loeb trans.

11. F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993), 90–91.

and that successive tolls and charges had to be paid en route and finally to the Roman *publicani* (tax collectors) at Gaza. Unfortunately Pliny does not give an estimate of the original value of each load in denarii.

It is a great pity that Pliny also fails to indicate that the latter stages of this route, before it reached Gaza, will have passed through the territory of the kingdom of Nabataea. But we know that it must have done so, until that area became in 106 the Roman province of "Arabia." For the regal period, at any rate, we can fill in the picture from the description in Strabo's *Geography*, written under Augustus and Tiberius. According to him there was a regular trade route from Petra to Leuke Kome, at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, "to which and from which camel traders travel safely and easily on the route from and to Petra, in such numbers of men and camels as to differ in no way from an army."[12] Strabo is in fact touching here on a different aspect of the movement of trade, namely that which came by sea up the Red Sea as far as Leuke Kome, where goods were landed and taken up to Petra. Hence the *Periplus* mentions Leuke Kome, "through which there is a way inland up to Petra, to Malichus, king of the Nabataeans. This harbour also serves in a way the function of a port of trade for the craft, none large, that come to it loaded with freight from Arabia. For that reason, as a safeguard there is dispatched for duty in it a customs officer to deal with the (duty of a) fourth on incoming merchandise, as well as a centurion with a detachment of soldiers."[13] In spite of much argument, it can be taken as certain that the "centurion" was in fact a Nabataean officer, and the king was Malchus II, who reigned from A.D. 40 to 70. Here, also, for the first time, we have a description of a regular "caravan." Ships still came up this route three centuries later, perhaps indeed even further up, to Aqaba or Elat at the head of the gulf, the ancient Aela. Eusebius identifies this place as "lying next to the Red Sea, sailed by those coming from Egypt and those from India."[14]

From Leuke Kome, caravans will clearly have travelled up the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba; from Aela onwards they could either go up what was later (after the Roman annexation of the area in 106) to be the Via Nova running north-eastwards to Petra and beyond; or perhaps they may have diverged almost due north, to reach the Mediterranean at Gaza. In fact it is perhaps more likely that even goods eventually bound for Gaza normally went through Petra, avoiding the more mountainous parts of northern Sinai; if so, the route will then have crossed the Wadi Arabah westwards and then

12. Strabo, *Geog*. 16.4.23 (781).

13. *Periplus* 19, trans. Casson.

14. Eusebius, *Onomastikon*, ed. Klostermann, 6.

traversed the Negev. At any rate Strabo briefly describes the nature of the route of 260 stadia between Aela and Gaza: over desert and sandy regions, and traversed (once again) by camels.[15] Elsewhere he indicates a slightly different route for goods landed at Leuke Kome: from there to Petra and then across to Rhinocoloura (on the coast south-west from Gaza).[16]

Gaza seems to have played the major role as the post through which high-value goods, such as frankincense, finally reached the Mediterranean. Roman *publicani* were thus stationed there in the later first century, as we know from Pliny.[17]

Strabo does indeed imply, in the last passage quoted, that much of the sea trade from the Indian Ocean had already shifted to Egypt, which is likely to be true, and to have remained so throughout the Empire. But what needs to be stressed is that there was a series of land routes, or combined land-and-sea routes, from the East to the Mediterranean. If we were looking for "caravan cities," we might be in danger of finding too many. So, for instance, Strabo also implies that in the area of Damascus there were robbers based on Trachonitis—that extraordinary broken lava field which lies like a pancake on the plain between Damascus and the Hauran—and that, until repressed in the later 20s B.C., they would raid merchants (*emporoi*) coming from Arabia Felix.[18] *If* that is true, it must mean that some traders, coming either by land or sea from the Yemen, continued north from Petra, presumably along the line of the later Via Nova, past the Decapolis region to Bostra, and on to Damascus. If so, not two but perhaps three trade routes may have met at Damascus: namely that just implied, from the south; the road westwards over Anti-Lebanon, into the Beqaʿ valley and over Mount Lebanon to the coast at Berytus; and that running north-eastwards along the line of the later *Strata Diocletiana* ("Diocletian road") to Palmyra and beyond.[19] Thus Damascus also might hypothetically count as a "caravan city."[20] The evidence for this, as is obvious, is however extremely slight, and far more significance attaches to the extensive cultivable zone which surrounds it.[21]

15. *Geog.* 16.2.30 (759).

16. *Geog.* 16.4.24 (781).

17. See C. A. M. Glucker, *The City of Gaza in the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (BAR International Series 325, 1987), 86–93.

18. *Geog.* 16, 2, 20 (756).

19. See text to n. 50 below.

20. For a survey of the urban history of Damascus in antiquity, not considering possible trade communications, see E. Will, "Damas antique," *Syria* 71 (1994): 1–43.

21. See M. Dodinet, J. Leblanc, J.-P. Vallat, and F. Villeneuve, "Le paysage antique en Syrie: l'exemple de Damas," *Syria* 67 (1990): 339–54.

In recent years indeed, it has been supposed—on extremely slight evidence—that the economic centre of the Nabataean kingdom under its last king, Rabbel II (70–106), shifted to the north, to Bostra.[22] There is really no good evidence for this. But one thing which has suggested it is the evidence—very slight but real—for a Nabataean and then a Roman presence far down the Wadi Sirhan to the south-east, namely at Duma or Dumatha. This is present-day al-Jawf, some 500 kilometres from Bostra, where there are both Nabataean and Roman graffiti.[23] Was there a trade route through here? If there were, it would have involved a journey of the 500 kilometres from the nearest Greek cities, Philadelphia or Bostra, and then nearly another 500 to the nearest point on the Euphrates, before the descent to the Gulf. It is not impossible: the route in 65 stages from Thomna to Gaza was longer. Moreover, here too, Pliny the Elder does describe such a route, even if his ideas on distance are completely confused: he does however seem to imply that one could travel from Petra via Dumatha to the river systems of lower Mesopotamia.[24] His conceptions are vague, to say the least. But we know that Dumatha was within the Nabataean-Roman sphere of influence; and there can hardly have been much point in going there except to continue to the head of the gulf.

The trade route to the East which has always attracted the most attention is of course that through Palmyra to the Euphrates. But before we come to that area, let us look further north. For in the nature of the case, except in special conditions, the existence of the Fertile Crescent meant that most traffic aiming for any point in the central Asian land-mass would leave the Mediterranean coast in northern Syria, the area which had been suddenly urbanised by Seleucus I around the year 300 B.C.: here there were the ports of Seleucia and Laodicea, and the inland cities of Antiochia and Apamea, further up the Orontes; and further inland and to the north Cyrrhus (now just on the Syrian side of the Turkish border), and to its south Beroea (Aleppo), centred on its magnificent natural acropolis. These two places in fact defined the two main ways by which one might continue from Antiochia to cross the Euphrates: either north-east through Cyrrhus to another Seleucia, usually known as Zeugma, "the bridge," and then into Mesopotamia, to reach Edessa; or on eastwards through Beroea, watered by the river Belus,

22. See M. Sartre, *Bostra. Des origines à l'Islam* (1985), 54–56; Millar (n. 11), 408.

23. For Dumatha, see Millar (n. 11), 392.

24. Pliny *NH* 6, 146. It should be clear enough that Pliny is totally confused about spatial relationships in this area. See, however, D. T. Potts, "Trans-Arabian Routes of the Pre-Islamic Period," in *L'Arabie et ses mers bordières* I: *Itinéraires et voyages*, ed. J.-F. Salles (1988), 127–62.

and then north-eastwards to Hierapolis, before crossing the river. Here again, we have crucial evidence from Strabo, though he in fact fails to understand the point of his own description of where travellers went after they crossed the Euphrates. He seems to be thinking of the more southerly crossing near Hierapolis; but the essential point which he makes is that after crossing the Euphrates travellers continued into the desert, and then kept the river (the Euphrates) on their right for a three-day journey. The reason which he gives is extremely important for understanding not only this route but also that through Palmyra: that is, that the chiefs of the tent dwellers (*Skenitai*) living further from the river were more moderate in the payments they asked for and were more helpful in providing watering places for the camels.[25] The ambivalent relationship between traveller and local community thus surfaces once again, as it does also on the route between the Yemen and Gaza.

Strabo does also mention the other crucial factor: namely, the two tributaries of the Euphrates which rise in the Mesopotamian shelf, the Balikh and the Chabur. But he does not relate them to the route taken. This vital item is supplied by Strabo's contemporary, Isidorus of Charax. The point comes from his brief but priceless itinerary of how one journeyed through Parthian territory, the *Parthian Stations*, discussed above. He describes the more northerly route, from the Euphrates at Zeugma, and from there across to the river Balikh; and then down the Balikh to its confluence with the Euphrates at Nikephorion. Then the route went down the Euphrates past its confluence with the Chabur; and then, as we saw earlier, it took the traveller back onto the right bank, past Dura and on down the river as far as the royal canal, where one crossed over to Seleucia on the Tigris.

The fact that both of these two northern routes—that through Zeugma and that through Hierapolis—were well established in the late first century B.C. is important. For there is a danger of reading our scattered literary references as if they added up to a consistent story—that is, a shift away both from trade through Nabataea and through Palmyra in favour of a northern route through the Fertile Crescent. But, firstly, the northern route itself—or at least one variant of it—in fact turned south as soon as it reached the Balikh; and, secondly, for the traveller there was always a choice at that point. We can see this in the wonderful account of this area as it was in the fourth century contained in the *History* of Ammianus. Two sections are of particular importance. The first is the famous account of the fair at Batnae, or Anthemusia, which lay near the more northerly route between the Euphrates at Zeugma and the headwaters of the Balikh:

25. *Geog.* 16, 1, 27 (748).

> The town of Batnae, founded in Anthemusia in early times by a band of Macedonians, is separated by a short space from the river Euphrates; it is filled with wealthy traders when, at the yearly festival, near the beginning of the month of September, a great crowd of every condition gathers for the fair, to traffic in the wares sent from India and China [*Seres*], and in other articles that are regularly brought there in great abundance by land and sea.[26]

Is the reference to "the Chinese" (*Seres*) an allusion to a "silk road" running through the Asian land-mass? That is certainly possible. But there is also a reference here to "the Indians," and to goods coming by sea as well as by land. What this means is explained when Ammianus describes Julian's last expedition, on which his army marched out in 363, from Antioch through Beroea (Aleppo) and Hierapolis (hence by the more southerly route), and then to the Euphrates. From there he crossed over to Batnae, thus apparently travelling north-eastwards to join the more northerly route, and from there continued to Carrhae, the ancient Harran: "From there two different royal highways lead to Persia: the one on the left through Adiabene and over the Tigris; the other, on the right, through Assyria and across the Euphrates."[27] Julian then pretended to march towards the Tigris, but in fact followed the other route, in fact exactly that traced in the *Parthian Stations*: that is to say, down the Balikh to Callinicum on the Euphrates; on to the confluence of the Chabur and the Euphrates, where Diocletian had established the fortress of Circesium; then past the now deserted town of Dura; and then further south to the King's Canal, Seleucia, and Ctesiphon.

These two alternative ways of starting from Syria therefore represented variants on an established means of reaching northern Mesopotamia. The central feature of both was the step of avoiding the long curve of the Euphrates by crossing to the headwaters of the Balikh on the Mesopotamian shelf, before turning south to travel down the Balikh to the Euphrates. In the fourth century this area was Roman territory; but conversely the Euphrates below the Chabur, including the deserted town of Dura, which had been in Roman hands from the 160s to the 250s, was now Persian.

From the lower Euphrates, or from Ctesiphon on the Tigris, one could travel down either river to the shores of the gulf and take ship for India. It was on that shore, as a famous story in Cassius Dio records, that Trajan—the only Roman emperor ever to reach the Gulf—had stood and watched a merchantman setting off for India. If only he had been as young as Alexan-

26. Ammianus 16, 3, 3, Loeb trans.

27. Ammianus 23, 2, 3–3.1, Loeb trans.

der![28] The merchants were still there in (probably) the third century, when the "Hymn of the Pearl" included in the Syriac *Acts of Thomas* describes it as "the meeting-place of the merchants of the East."[29] There is no reason to think that this later ceased to be so.

There are two reasons why it *has* been supposed that the main trade routes shifted northwards in the course of the imperial period (see text to n. 26 above). One is the history of Palmyra, to which we will come. The other is the treaty which Diocletian made, after conquering the upper Tigris region, in 298 or 299. One provision in the treaty was that Nisibis, situated in eastern Mesopotamia not far from the Tigris, should be the only place of *synallagmata*.[30] The term should perhaps mean "contracts" or "agreements" rather than specifically "exchanges of goods." In any case, as we have seen, goods sent from India and China were certainly being traded at Batnae, further west than Nisibis, in the 350s. Similarly, that splendid geographical text of the mid-fourth century, the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (Description of the Whole World and Peoples), describes how wealth was gained from trade with Persia both by Nisibis but also by another city which may be either Amida, further up the Tigris, or less probably Edessa: "for, receiving goods from the Persians, they sell them throughout the whole territory of the Romans."[31] But in any case the precise pattern of these exchanges will have been altered profoundly when Jovian in 363, after Julian's death, had to cede Nisibis, Singara, and five districts along the Tigris to the Persians. Moreover, we do not know what routes trade had followed beyond Nisibis: directly to China along the "silk route" through central Asia; or down the Tigris to Babylonia and the Gulf? In 363, after Julian's death, Jovian had in fact brought his forces back up the east side of the Tigris, and then across to Hatra in the Mesopotamian steppe, and on to Nisibis.

The two alternatives are not of course mutually exclusive. What is certain is firstly that this northern route, at least as far as the cities of the Mesopotamian shelf, was in use throughout the Roman imperial period. Secondly,

28. Dio 68, 29, 1.

29. A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas. Introduction—Text—Commentary* (1962), trans. of 109, 18 (p. 121).

30. Petrus Patricius, fr.14 (*FHG* IV, 189). See Millar (n. 11), 178.

31. J. Rougé, *Expositio totius mundi et gentium. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes et commentaire* (Sources Chrétiennes 124, 1966), 22: *Sunt ergo Nisibis et Edessa, quae in omnibus viros habent optimos et in negotio valde acutos et bene venantes. Praecipue et divites et omnibus bonis ornati sunt: accipientes enim a Persis ipsi in omnem terram Romanorum vendentes et ementes iterum tradunt, extra aeramen et ferrum*. Since Edessa is mentioned separately at the end of the same paragraph, it does not seem that it can have been named in the first phrase quoted.

it seems clear that camel trains were in use here too. One of the great discoveries of recent years has been the new archive of papyri of the 230s to 250s which comes from the middle Euphrates and includes items in Greek, Syriac, or both. One of them, of about 240, shows a man from Beth Phouraia, near the confluence of the Chabur and the Euphrates, advising his son on the hire of camels for the journey from Beroea (Aleppo) to Zeugma.[32] The "caravan," if that is what it was, will thus have been going from the southern route to the Euphrates to the northern one—but where next is not made clear. Thirdly, all the routes concerned were exposed to attacks from the nomads whom Graeco-Roman writers called "Skenitai" (tent dwellers) or "Arabes" or (from the second century onwards) "Sarakenoi" or "Saracens." A succession of "Saracen" kings, for instance, came to join Julian on his expedition into Persia.[33] But our most vivid impression comes from Jerome, in the *Life* of Malchus. The story is set before 363, when Nisibis was lost to the Persians. Malchus was journeying eastwards from near Chalcis, on the edge of the Syrian steppe south of Beroea, to see his parents who lived near Nisibis. But along the road the "company," deliberately travelling together for protection, were attacked by "Saracens," whom Jerome, as a Christian, also calls "Ishmaelites." Unfortunately Jerome does not make clear whether this episode is supposed to have taken place west or east of the Euphrates. At any rate the narrative is too vivid not to quote:

> Lying near the public highway from Beroea to Edessa, there is a desert through which nomad Saracens are always wandering back and forth. For this reason, travellers along the way group together and, by mutual aid, decrease the danger of surprise attack. There were in my company men, women, old men, young people, children, numbering in all about seventy. Suddenly, Ishmaelites, riding upon horses and camels, descended upon us in a startling attack, with their long hair flying from under their head-bands.[34]

The group whom Malchus had joined had clearly gathered for protection. He uses for them the word *comitatus*, which could properly be translated "caravan."

32. D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (III^e siècle après J.-C.). III. Actes divers et letters (P.Euphr. 11 à 17)," *JS* 2000: no. 16; cf. H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35, no. 33.

33. See Ammianus 23, 3, 8; 24, 1, 10; 2, 4. Cf. 14, 4.

34. Jerome, *V. Malchi* 4 (*PL* XXIII, cols. 55–62). Translated by M. L. Ewald in *Early Christian Biographies*, ed. R. J. Deferrari (1952), 281ff.

We therefore come to the same conclusion as before. As places from which groups of travellers set off across the margins of the steppe, exposed to attacks from nomads, or at least to the exaction of tolls by them, Antiochia, Beroea, and Hierapolis in Syria; Zeugma on the Euphrates; and Batnae, Edessa, and Nisibis in Mesopotamia might all be seen, potentially, as "caravan cities." The facts of geography, and above all of the availability of water, must always have meant that most traffic from the coastal area of the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia, Babylonia, or central Asia travelled along the Fertile Crescent.

All this has been necessary to put what we know of Palmyra in proper context. In this case we are talking about a very different geographical context. But it was not *wholly* different. It was not only, as Pliny knew (text following n. 9 above), that Palmyra was a well-watered oasis. It was also that it owed the existence of that oasis to its position under a chain of quite high mountains which stretches out north-eastwards from the major mountain of Anti-Lebanon above Damascus. In the mountainous, and not entirely arid, zone north-west of Palmyra there was an extensive area of villages with small temples and Palmyrene inscriptions, brilliantly studied by Daniel Schlumberger.[35] The limit of the zone of 200 millimetres rainfall comes quite close to Palmyra, whose date palms still benefit also from a natural spring.

Palmyra was certainly not, however, the centre of a rich, fertile countryside like that around Gerasa, which there is indeed no reason to think of as a "caravan city" at all. But, equally, it was also, like any other Graeco-Roman city, the "central place" of an agricultural hinterland, as well as having, like Damascus, a rich oasis immediately round it. It is these circumstances which explain why, whatever is going to cast light on the long-distance "caravan" trade of Palmyra (which was a reality), it is not the famous customs law. For, as John Matthews showed, this law in fact deals with products coming into the city from its immediate hinterland.[36] Indeed it is not, strictly speaking, only a customs law, since traders, including prostitutes, are also taxed; it is in fact a law on the indirect taxes which Palmyra, like any other city in the Empire, was entitled to raise. But the text does refer to loads brought in by camel or donkey; to animals coming in for slaughter; to bronze statues being imported; to the sale of salt; and to sheep being brought in, either for grazing or to be sheared. Almost nothing in the law suggests long-distance trade in luxuries; indeed the only item which might do so is the reference to camel- or donkey-loads of ointment, namely "myrrh." An analysis of the

35. D. Schlumberger, *La Palmyrène du Nord-ouest* (1951).

36. J. F. Matthews, "The Tax Law of Palmyra: Evidence for Economic History in a City of the Roman East," *JRS* 74 (1984): 157–80.

tax law thus produces a picture of economic movements and of the city's relationship to trade which could be true of any city. If Palmyra were indeed a "caravan city" the tax law does not reveal it.

I am not going to argue that there was no sense in which this is true of Palmyra. It does have to be admitted however that outsiders' references to Palmyra, and to its distinctive character as a city, are extraordinarily few. To the best of my knowledge, not a single Graeco-Roman writer refers to the remarkable art and architecture of Palmyra, even though we know that it was visited by three emperors, Hadrian, Severus Alexander, and Aurelian. Nor does anyone allude to the fact that in Palmyra alone, of all the cities in the Empire, one could see a series of public inscriptions in both Greek and a Semitic language, in parallel, which lasted for almost three centuries (see chapter 8 in the present volume). Josephus however does give us a vivid picture of Palmyra, which he supposed to have been founded by Solomon:

> He [Solomon] advanced into the desert of Upper Syria and, having taken possession of it, founded there a very great city at a distance of two days' journey from Upper Syria and one day's journey from the Euphrates, while from the great Babylon the distance was a journey of six days. Now the reason for founding the city so far from the inhabited parts of Syria was that further down there was no water anywhere in the land and that only in this place were springs and wells to be found. And so, when he had built this city and surrounded it with very strong walls, he named it Thadamora, as it is still called by the Syrians, while the Greeks call it Palmyra.[37]

Josephus' impressions of the distances are much too short: Palmyra will have been almost eight days' journey from Antioch, and six days' from the Euphrates at Dura; the journey to Babylon will have taken something like another twelve days. But its role as a major watering place on the route between Syria and Babylonia is clearly brought out.

Josephus, however, says nothing specifically about trade. Remarkably enough, the only ancient writer who does refer to the trade of Palmyra is Appian. Describing the attack on Palmyra by the forces of Marcus Antonius in 41 B.C., Appian says, moving into the present tense, "for being merchants [*emporoi*] they bring goods from [the territory of] the Persians and dispose of them in that of the Romans."[38] Though the urbanisation of Palmyra had already begun in the first century B.C., what Appian says is evidence for his

37. Josephus, *Ant.* 8, 153–54, Loeb trans.

38. Appian, *BC* 5, 9, 37–38.

own time, the mid-second century. It should be stressed that we have no other external evidence for Palmyrene trade, and no internal literary evidence (there is no Palmyrene literature), nor anything more than scraps of Palmyrene documents on perishable materials.[39]

In short everything that we know about Palmyrene trade is a function of the Palmyrene version of the "epigraphic habit." What is unique about this habit is simply that it did remain bilingual, from the later first century B.C. to a few years after Aurelian's reconquest (i.e., to the late 270s). After that, it is essential to stress, Palmyra was not destroyed but continued to exist as a minor Greek provincial city, with a Roman garrison.

The inscriptions which refer to Palmyrene trade stretch from A.D. 19 to the 260s.[40] The first thing to stress is that, as proper off-shoots of the Graeco-Roman "epigraphic habit" the relevant inscriptions are all, without exception, honorific inscriptions for individuals. The earliest of them comes from A.D. 19, put up by Greek and Palmyrene merchants "in Seleucia" (BSLWKY' in the Palmyrene text, in fact the only reference to Seleucia in the epigraphy of Palmyra).[41] The next is of A.D. 24, put up to honour Malichos son of Nesa by "the merchants who are in Babylon, because he benefitted them in all ways."[42] The series continues to the 260s, with a marked concentration in the earlier second century. The latest firmly dated one is of 257/8 and is put up by the *boulē* and *dēmos* (council and people) of what was now a Roman colony to honour Iulius Aurelius Salamallathus, an *archemporos* (leading merchant), for having "brought back" a caravan (*synodia*) "without charging, at his own expense."[43] The second thing to note is that all the places mentioned in the inscriptions lie to the east of Palmyra: the city of Seleucia on the Tigris is mentioned, as we have just seen, only once, on a fragmentary inscription of A.D. 19. Otherwise we have references to Vologaesias, somewhere on the Euphrates, to Mesene at the head of the Persian Gulf, and, very significantly, to "Scythia." We know what they will have meant by "Scythia," because the *Periplus* (38) also refers to this area—it was north-west India. So, for instance, one of the many inscriptions of the mid-second century in honour of M. Ulpius Iaraios, or Yarhai, was put up "by the merchants who have returned from

39. For the known fragments, from Palmyra itself and Dura, see Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 32), nos. 2, 153; the latter is listed also as *PAT*, no. 152.

40. All the known inscriptions relating to Palmyrene trade are conveniently listed by M. Gawlikowski, "Palmyra as a Trading Centre," *Iraq* 56 (1994): 27–33, on 32–33. Those referred to in this paper will have their numbers in *PAT* added.

41. *CIS* II.3, no. 3924 = *Inv*. IX, no. 6A = *PAT*, no. 0270.

42. *CIS* II.3, no. 3915 = *Inv*. IX, no. 11 = *PAT*, no. 1352.

43. *CIS* II.3, no. 3936 = *Inv*. IV, no. 13 = *PAT*, no. 0282.

Scythia in the ship of Onainos son of Addoudanos," because of the assistance which he had given them.[44]

Palmyrene traders, it is quite clear, regularly travelled across the steppe to the Euphrates, either directly to Dura or on the route south-westwards to Hit (Aeipolis). The long track across the steppe is still visible from the air. They might go as far down the river as Vologaesias, whose exact location on the Euphrates is not known, or on to Spasinou Charax (Mesene), which is mentioned several times in the inscriptions from the second century. But they might also take ship to north-west India. Strictly speaking there is no Palmyrene evidence to show that they ever took the route north-eastwards into central Asia, starting from Seleucia and crossing the Zagros Mountains, which Isidorus' *Parthian Stations* indicates (see text to n. 4 and to nn. 26–28 above). As Gawlikowski has made clear, the Palmyrene trade route reflected in the inscriptions runs, without exception, south-eastwards towards the head of the gulf: "There is strictly nothing to suggest that the Palmyrenes were interested in the land route through Iran and Central Asia, the celebrated Silk Road."[45]

There did seem at one moment to be real archaeological evidence for a Palmyrene presence on the Silk Road, in the form of two Palmyrene *stēlai* (inscribed pillars) found at Merv in present-day Turkmenistan; but unfortunately it now seems clear that they were brought there in the nineteenth century.[46]

What we can know from the honorific inscriptions is confined—obviously enough—to what they will tell us. Firstly, there were indeed "caravans"—*synodiai*. Their members are called in Palmyrene BNY ŠYRT' (sons of the caravan). Secondly, these caravans required protection against the peoples living in the steppe. The protection involved might simply be financial, in other words the payment of something between tolls and protection money (compare Pliny's account of the route through the Hedjaz, and Strabo's of the Euphrates route: text to nn. 10–12 and 14–17 above). We have seen how Salamallathos in 257 brought back a *synodia* "at no cost," "at his own expense." But on other occasions real fighting was involved. In 199 Ogelos son of Makkaios is honoured "for his having given satisfaction through continued commands [*stratēgiai*] against the *nomades*, and having provided safety for the merchants [*emporoi*] and the caravans [*synodiai*] in all his commands of caravans [*syno-*

44. *Inv.* X, no. 96 = *PAT*, no. 1405.

45. Gawlikowski (n. 40), 29.

46. For the evidence and references, see K. Parlasca, "Auswärtige Beziehungen Palmyras im Lichte archäologischer Funde," *Dam. Mitt.* 6 (1992): 257–65, on 258.

diarchai]."[47] We know that the Palmyrenes, uniquely for a provincial city, maintained military outposts far away on the Euphrates, outside the Roman provincial area.[48]

Our knowledge of the difficulties and dangers which faced caravans on their way back from Vologaesias to Palmyra has been enhanced by a recently published bilingual inscription of A.D. 144 from the temple of Athena, honouring Soados son of Boliades (to use his Greek name). He had saved a caravan under attack from forces under a leader called in Palmyrene 'Abdallat Ahiitya, and the allusion here seems to be quite clearly to military protection. Since the preliminary publication appears in an article by H. J. W. Drijvers on the dependence of the public vocabulary of Palmyrene on Greek,[49] and might thus escape notice altogether, it is worth reproducing Drijvers' translation here, with minor presentational changes:

> [The statues?], this one in [the temple of Athen]a, one in the sacred garden, and one in the temple of Atargatis, [which] have been erected next to the first four statues that were erected by the first caravan [*synodia*] for Soados son of Boliades son of Thaimisamsos, who is pious and patriotic, through his benevolence and magnanimity towards the citizens in every way, adorned with distinctions and very great honours, the caravan [*synodia*] of all Palmyrenes which came back from Vologaesias erected, because he advanced in a distinguished manner, taking with him a large force, and he protected (them) against [Ab]dallathos from Eeithe and these ["the robbers" in the Palmyrene text] that were brought together by him from P[.....] who for a long time were lying in wait in order to harm the [caravan...] he preserved them. Therefore they erected for him [the statues?] to honour him, when Malê son of Sumonos [.....] and [E]nnibel son of Sumonos son of Bazekes were caravan-leaders [*συνοδιαρχούντων*] in the year 455 month Daisius (June).

The Abdallathos against whom Soados had protected the caravan will presumably have been very like the *phylarchoi* (tribal chiefs) of the Skenitai of whom Strabo speaks as operating on the other side of the Euphrates (text

47. *Inv.* X, no. 44 = *PAT*, no. 1378.

48. See M. Gawlikowski, "Palmyra et l'Euphrate," *Syria* 60 (1983): 53–68; Millar (n. 11), 115, 133–34.

49. H. J. W. Drijvers, "Greek and Aramaic in Palmyrene Inscriptions," in *Studia Aramaica: New Sources and New Approaches*, ed. M. J. Geller and J. C. Greenfield (1995), 31–42, on 33–39, with pl. 2. Not included in *PAT*.

to n. 25 above). This seems to be the only occasion on which one of them is mentioned by name in the epigraphy of Palmyra.

We should not minimise what we can learn from these inscriptions, limited as they are in their formal character. *Synodiai*, "caravans," were indeed a regular feature of trade. There was a public position called *synodiarchos* (commander of a caravan) and another called *archemporos* (leading merchant). These caravans travelled across the steppe to and from Vologaesias and Spasinou Charax. Some Palmyrene merchants ventured further, across the Indian ocean. Protection against the dangers of the land route was necessary and was supplied either by money or by actual fighting against the *nomades*.

But we learn nothing of the internal organisation of a *synodia*; nothing whatsoever of the objects of trade; nothing directly about the forms of transport, presumably camels or donkeys; and above all we hear nothing of how, or in what direction, this trade was then carried westwards—that is, of how, in Appian's words, the Palmyrenes disposed of the goods in the empire of the Romans (see text to n. 38 above).

What this means is that what the inscriptions will tell us is determined by their political and, to an extent, military preoccupations: the benefits which the *euergetai* (benefactors) who were honoured conferred related to the no-man's-land of the steppe between Palmyra and the Euphrates, and between the Roman and the Parthian, and then the Persian, empires. The routes to the west, towards the coast, will have been relatively secure. One certainly led south-eastwards to Damascus; by the end of the third century this route had an imperial name, the "Strata Diocletiana," and was lined with Roman forts.[50] Anything which reached the Mediterranean from there will have been carried through the pass over Anti-Lebanon into the Beqaʿ valley and then over Mount Lebanon to Berytus. Much more direct was the route westwards to Emesa (Homs), or Laodicea ad Libanum, and then through the Homs gap to the sea. When traffic reached the sea, the obvious ports were the old Phoenician cities of Arados to the north and Tripolis to the south. But to say that is immediately to reveal how little impression we have of the trading role of these very modest places under the Empire. There is no doubt of course that cargoes could be picked up by trading ships moving along this coast either southwards, to Egypt, or more importantly northwards and then along southern Asia Minor to the central Mediterranean. Saint Paul, on his last missionary journey, took a ship going from Patara southwards to Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea (Acts 21:1–16). Then, when sent to appear before

50. See Millar (n. 11), 183–84; see T. Bauzou, "Epigraphie et topographie: le cas de la Palmyrène du sud-ouest," *Syria* 70 (1993): 27–50.

Caesar, he was put on another going northwards, from Caesarea to Sidon, Cyprus, and Myra, where he was transferred to an Alexandrian corn ship bound for Rome (27:1–6). The Pseudo-Clementines also contain a quite detailed account of a voyage up the Phoenician coast, stopping at a number of places.[51] We do not need to multiply testimonies, for it is beyond doubt that, once at the coast, goods could be transferred to the Mediterranean sea trade. High-value, low-volume cargoes could easily be put on such ships as Acts describes. But have we any concrete evidence that such cargoes, transported from the interior, were in fact traded on the Phoenician coast? The answer is somewhat embarrassing, namely a single passage of Galen. It comes in his description of how he collected specimens of chemicals and drugs on a journey to Lemnos, Cyprus, and Palaestine:

> Moreover I had the good fortune to lay hold of the Indian *lycium* which had been recently imported to Phoenicia together with the Indian aloe. This happened when I was on my way back from Palaestina, and I was persuaded that the *lycium* was Indian both by the very fact that it was brought by camels, together with the whole cargo and because the spurious one could not be known to those who brought the *lycium* as the material from which it is prepared is not produced in their localities.[52]

Galen makes his reasoning quite clear: the Indian product, *lycium*, could be regarded as being both authentically Indian and as having been imported overland, since the whole consignment had been brought by camels (*phortion* here surely refers to the presumed transport by land). The carriers must therefore, it seems, have come via Palmyra.

Galen's conclusion is of some significance. For *lycium* is among the products which the *Periplus* describes as being imported by sea from north-west India to Egypt.[53] Pliny the Elder also adds that it was sent by "the Indians" in the skins of camels or rhinoceruses.[54]

Galen does not tell us where these caravans reached the Phoenician coast, or indeed precisely where he acquired the goods. But his presumption is enough to produce further possible candidates for the title of "caravan city": Emesa, whose rise and fall, as Seyrig suggested, exactly parallels that of Pal-

51. *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitiones*, *Homelies* 12–13.

52. Galen, *de simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis*, ed. Kühn, vol. XII, 215; text with translation in Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 385, whose translation is used here.

53. See Casson (n. 3), esp. 16–17, 192–93.

54. Pliny, *NH* 12, 31.

myra to its east;[55] perhaps even Laodicea ad Libanum—if geographic determinism really determined anything, and if trade had been a major factor in the growth of cities, this place ought to have been one of the major cities of the ancient world. For it lies in the Homs gap between Palmyra and the sea, and just where that route crosses the Orontes as it flows north from the rich Beqaʿ valley, towards Apamea and Antiochia. The vast tell of ancient Qadesh shows that in the past it had indeed been a major city. But in the Roman Empire it was not.

If we survey what we have found, bearing in mind how slight our literary evidence is, so that negative arguments—suggesting the non-existence of trade routes—could never rest securely on it, we find that there certainly were well-known long-distance trade routes by land. Firstly, in the south of the Roman Near East, it is quite clear that trade did cover the vast distance by land from the Yemen through the Hedjaz to the Mediterranean at Gaza or Rhinocoloura. It ran in parallel with a sea trade which might bring goods from the Indian Ocean to either the Egyptian or the Arabian shore of the Red Sea. Goods brought originally by either means might well pass through Petra. But much more evidence would be needed before we could properly characterise Petra as a "caravan city," rather than as a royal capital, and then modest provincial city, situated in a zone where agriculture was possible, and a number of minor settlements also existed. The emerging evidence of the newly discovered sixth-century papyri from Petra makes this agricultural hinterland visible for the first time.[56]

Rather further north, it is probable that a trade route ran south-eastwards from the Hauran and Bostra through the Wadi Sirhan to Dumatha and then to the gulf. But we have so far no idea of the volume or nature of any such trade, or whether it will have had any effect on the character of cities in the provincial area. Just conceivably, trade from this direction, or that continuing northwards from Petra, may have passed through Gerasa, whose fine central plaza, with its unique oval shape, suggested to Rostovtzeff a possible role as a meeting place for caravans. But given the rich territory of Gerasa, no such explanation for the architectural grandeur of the city is required. As with Damascus itself, where various trade routes may have met, we can only say that the evidence, while it does not exclude, also does not require any characterisation of it as a trading, or "caravan," city.

It should be stressed emphatically that if long-distance trade by land had been important anywhere, it should have been not in this southern zone

55. See H. Seyrig, "Caractères de l'histoire d'Émèse," *Syria* 36 (1959): 184–92.

56. L. Koenen, "The Carbonized Archive from Petra," *JRA* 9 (1996): 177–88.

but in the north, where traffic along the Fertile Crescent will have reached the Mediterranean, crossing the Euphrates at Zeugma or near Hierapolis and proceeding towards Beroea (Aleppo) and Antiochia, and then the fine ports founded in the early Seleucid period, Seleucia and Laodicea. If we look in the other direction, eastwards to central Asia, all the concrete indications are that traffic followed the Euphrates and Tigris south-eastwards at least as far as Seleucia on the Tigris, and that it was (at least) characteristic for it to continue further to Mesene. There this land trade route became a sea route, in which ships sailed first to "Scythia," the north-west corner of the Indian subcontinent, and might go further south along the coast, and on occasion to Taprobane (Sri Lanka) or into the Bay of Bengal.

This is not the place to explore the sea trade in the Indian Ocean, illuminated now by a Greek contract on papyrus drawn up at Muziris.[57] What is important is to stress that in "Scythia," as the *Periplus* (39; 48) shows, silk and Chinese pelts were obtainable. According to the *Periplus* (64) goods from China could be brought overland through Bactria and then to northern India, reaching the sea either by being carried down the Ganges to the Bay of Bengal or at Barygaza, one of the ports of "Scythia."

We can take it as certain, therefore, that caravans did leave the central and northern areas of the Roman Near East, and did travel down the great river systems to the gulf, where the sea trade to India put them in contact with goods brought overland from China. These considerations must raise the question of whether there was indeed a *trade* route following the alternative itinerary which Isidorus maps out in his *Parthian Stations*, from Seleucia north-eastwards across the Zagros, to Media and Bactria—and then hypothetically continuing, as Isidorus' route does not, eastwards to China. Finds of Chinese products in the Mediterranean area, for instance fragments of Chinese silk at Palmyra,[58] would obviously, of themselves, not prove the existence of a central Asian route, as opposed to any other. However, it would be absurd to deny that there were indeed a number of land routes through central Asia, or that trade travelled along them, in both directions. The first book of Ptolemy's *Geography* shows both that such routes were known and that they were used for trade: hence, for instance, Ptolemy's indication of a journey of 26,280 stades from the crossing of the Euphrates near Hierapolis to the "Stone Tower," and 36,200 from there to China.[59]

57. See, e.g., the articles collected in *Topoi Orient-Occident* 3.2 (1993), under the title "Inde, Arabie et Méditerranée orientale."

58. See, e.g., Parlasca (n. 46).

59. Ptolemy, *Geog.* 1, 11, 3.

The evidence on these central Asia trade routes cannot be considered here.[60] All that needs to be asserted is that there were indeed "caravans" using long-distance routes, both within the area of the Roman provinces (which in the 190s came to include northern Mesopotamia) and outside it, and that they characteristically tended to go as far as the "Kings' Canal" which joined the Euphrates and Tigris. What the relative importance was, after that point, of the overland route north-eastwards and the land-sea route south-eastwards cannot be determined.

Were there then "caravan cities"? All that can be said is that there were a large number of places through which long-distance trade will have passed. In the case of none of them, with one exception, does the evidence *require* a characterisation in terms of their trading role, as opposed to normal political or social functions, or an economic role in relation to the surrounding territory. But to say that is categorically not to prove a negative; it is to leave the question open.

The one exception is, of course, Palmyra. Even here, modern research has revealed the local geographical factors which made possible the existence of a city, as it has also the existence of an extensive hinterland where agriculture was practised. As it happens, precisely this is demonstrated by the actual character of the famous tax law. It is also of fundamental importance that all our extensive local evidence on the long-distance land (and sea) trade at Palmyra is due to a local variant of one of the most distinctive features of the political structure of the actual city: the honorific inscription as a specimen of the "epigraphic habit." In that sense, even Palmyra conforms to Finley's general view that trade has to be seen as "embedded" in a political structure. For what is categorically "embedded" in this sense is the whole of the documentation on which our knowledge of Palmyrene trade depends.

That said, however, the real world which the honorific inscriptions do (partially) reveal is indeed one of caravans organised to travel across the

60. A full study of this question would require a survey of archaeological finds both along the possible routes and at either end, as well as an analysis of literary and documentary evidence relating to journeys, and to social and economic structures. For some relevant approaches, see, e.g., M. Raschke, "New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East," *ANRW* II.9.2 (1972), 604–1361; W. H. Haussig, *Die Geschichte Zentralasiens und der Seidenstrasse in vorislamischer Zeit* (1983); R. Whitfield and A. Farrer, eds., *Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Chinese Art from the Silk Route* (1990); Stoneman (n. 7), chap. 2: "Of Spices, Silk and Camels." See also the the papers from an international conference on "Palmyra and the Silk Road," held in Palmyra in 1992 and published as a special issue of *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* 42 (1996). I was very grateful to Jessica Rawson for a valiant attempt to reduce my ignorance in this area.

steppe for purposes of trade, with merchants and "chief merchants" and "caravan leaders" taking steps to protect themselves against the nomads, either by negotiation or by suitable payments or by actual physical force. Even Palmyra did not live only by or for long-distance trade. But it is precisely the distinctive nature of the services for which its leading citizens might be honoured which makes it impossible to deny that Palmyra at least was indeed a "caravan city."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Looking East from the Classical World: Colonialism, Culture, and Trade from Alexander the Great to Shapur I[*]

The emperor Trajan's arrival at the head of the Persian Gulf in A.D. 116 was the only visit there by a Roman army in the course of the wars against the Parthian and Sassanid empires which continued sporadically for centuries. The occasion gave rise to a well-known and illuminating anecdote, told by Cassius Dio in his *Roman History*. As it happens, both the author and his *History* themselves illustrate the relationship between the classical world and Asia; for Dio was a Greek who came from Bithynia, the north-west corner of modern Turkey, but who was also a Roman senator, and was twice consul in the early third century. Looking back to Trajan's campaign a hundred years earlier, he writes in book 68 of his eighty-book *History* in Greek: "Then he came to the Ocean itself, and when he had learned its nature and had seen a ship sailing to India, he said, 'I would certainly have made an attempt against the Indians, if I were still young.' For he began to think about the Indians, and was curious about their affairs, and said how lucky Alexander had been."[1]

[*] First published in *International History Review* 20 (1998): 507–31.

This paper was a revised and expanded version of a lecture given at the Anglo-American Conference of Historians in London in July 1997, and also at Macquarie University, Sydney, in November 1997. As will be obvious, it can claim to do no more than touch, in a selective and personal way, on a few of the profound issues raised by this topic. References to both ancient evidence and modern literature are also very selective, and are intended to bring out particularly interesting recent discoveries, and to suggest further reading. For lesser-known ancient works I have noted English translations where available. I was extremely grateful to Amélie Kuhrt for detailed comments on an earlier draft of this paper, and to Jenny Graham for drawing the map.

1. Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 68, 29 (Loeb trans., vol. VIII, 415–17). For Trajan's campaign, see J. Bennett, *Trajan, Optimus Princeps: A Life and Times* (1997), chap. XIII.

The anecdote exemplifies one aspect of the relationship between the classical world and the peoples of Asia: imperialist dreams and ambitions, and actual conquest, whether long-lasting or ephemeral. Along with this went an ideology of colonialism underpinning a vision of the export of Greek, or Graeco-Roman, city life and civilisation to distant lands. These goals cause conceptual, and even moral, problems for us, obliging us to ask whether we can detach ourselves from a Western imperialist perspective. The difficulty arises not only from our lack of linguistic and scholarly training in the numerous and varied cultures, languages, and scripts in use in ancient Iran, central Asia, and India, but also from the lack in some areas of "native" written evidence, or the existence only of texts whose date and character is profoundly uncertain. In parts of Asia, the only "Asian" culture or belief system encountered turns out to have been one constructed by Graeco-Roman observers. Detaching oneself from a "classical," or Western, perspective, therefore, is more difficult than it might appear at first glance.

This essay will look eastwards from the Mediterranean. It will set out the broad lines of Graeco-Roman military and political involvement in Asia, from the Mediterranean through Iran to central Asia and northern India; point to the surviving traces of Greek culture and language from these regions; and discuss for which possible trade routes to the East we have reliable contemporary evidence for the Roman imperial period. To say that we do not have reliable evidence for a supposed trade route is not to claim that no such route existed. None the less, no adequate contemporary evidence survives from the classical period to demonstrate the existence of a "Silk Road" crossing central Asia to China.

Beyond the concrete, prosaic issues of wars and states, documents and traders, lie more complex questions of cultural and religious history, and of profound mutual influence. The essay does not attempt to explain, for example, the influence of Babylonian mythology and astronomy, or of "Zoroaster" and "Iranian dualism." Nor does it explain the origins and spread of Manichaeism, or of the preaching of Christianity in Asia. But it does examine the two remarkable Hellenistic inscriptions which represent the only known expression of Buddhism in classical Greek.

The essay focuses on the six centuries following Alexander's conquests. The culture of archaic Greece, from the eighth to the sixth centuries, and contemporary with the Neo-Assyrian, Babylonian, and Achaemenid Persian empires, emerged in the shadow of the major Near Eastern cultures, of Anatolia, Phoenicia, Egypt, and Babylonia. Several key developments, for instance, the derivation of the Greek alphabet from the Phoenician and the debt of Greek conceptions of the gods to Egypt, were recognized by

Herodotus as early as the fifth century B.C.[2] The importance of Babylonian mythology for early Greek literature, on the other hand, was unknown to Herodotus, and has only become clear in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the publication of Akkadian texts.[3] Whether we think of art, literature, astronomy, or conceptions of the world, the debt of early Greece to "Asia" is accepted by everyone and is the subject of important scholarly works.[4]

The "classical" period of Greek history, following the successful Greek resistance to the invasions by Darius and Xerxes in the Persian wars, was shaped by political and military relations with the Achaemenid Empire. For much of the sixth, fifth, and fourth centuries, the Persians ruled the western shores of the Aegean, where a large number of Greek cities were located, and Persian control extended round the eastern shores of the Mediterranean as far as Egypt and much of present-day Libya, where there had also been extensive Greek settlement. The relationship between the Greek world and Persia, and the Greeks' resistance to Persian conquest, was of course the subject of Herodotus' *Histories*, of Xenophon's *Anabasis* and to a certain extent of his *Hellenica*, and of Isocrates' remarkable analysis of the political situation of the Greek world as it was in 380 B.C., the *Panegyricus*.[5]

The cultural and artistic influences of the period are difficult to evaluate, not least because the empire ruled by the Persians embraced so many contrasting cultures, from Anatolia (with its Greek cities) to Phoenicia, Egypt, Babylonia, and their own homeland of Iran (the great mystery) itself. Although important exchanges in art and architecture occurred,[6] most significant for the future was the emergence in the fifth and fourth centuries of

2. Herodotus 5, 58–59 ("Phoenician letters"); 2, 41; 50 (borrowing of divine names from Egypt).

3. Note especially the useful collection and translation, *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh and Others* by S. Dalley (1989), and the much fuller presentation of the material by B. R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature* I–II (1993).

4. Note, e.g., S. P. Morris, *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art* (1992); W. Burkert, *The Orientalising Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (1992); or the massive work by M. West, *The East Face of Helicon: West Asiatic Elements in Early Poetry and Myth* (1997).

5. Translated in the Loeb edition of Isocrates, vol. I, 116ff. This much-underestimated text would be well worth studying as perhaps the earliest example of a systematic essay in strategic-political analysis.

6. See M. C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth Century BC: A Study in Cultural Receptivity* (1997).

a Greek ethnic, or consciously national, identity, which contrasted Greeks with *barbaroi*.[7] With that identity came indications of a claim to military and political superiority. As Greeks, for instance, practised athletics naked, in the sunlight, Xenophon records that at Ephesus in 395 the king of Sparta ordered that Persian prisoners being put up for sale should be stripped, to show their Greek captors how soft and white their bodies were.[8] Such attitudes led to a tendency to see non-Greeks in Asia as "lacking in spirit," and as not in possession of, or being incapable of exercising, political rights.[9] From this followed the perception that the Persian Empire might not be as strong as its vast extent suggested, an argument made by Isocrates in the *Panegyricus* on the evidence of the "Anabasis," the "march up-country," in 401 in support of Cyrus' claim to the Persian throne. Cyrus' forces had included Greek mercenaries, among them Xenophon himself, on whom Isocrates based his claim that the empire was more vulnerable than it seemed.[10]

When a new power, the Macedonian kingdom, arose in the mid-fourth century on the northern borders of the Greek world, it was Isocrates again who in 346 petitioned Philip II to take up an explicitly imperialist and colonialist role against Persia on behalf of the Greek world, partly to provide employment for the large numbers of unsettled mercenaries who, Isocrates believed, were destabilizing it:

> What opinion must we expect the world will have of you . . . if you undertake to conquer the whole empire of the King, or, at any rate, to wrest from it a vast extent of territory and sever from it—to use a current phrase—"Asia from Cilicia to Sinope" [western Asia Minor]; and if, furthermore, you undertake to establish cities in this region, and to settle in permanent abodes those who now, for lack of the daily necessities of life, are wandering from place to place and committing outrages upon whosoever they encounter?[11]

This is not the place for any detailed account of how Philip's son Alexander (r. 336–323 B.C.) not only fulfilled this programme but also exceeded it.[12]

7. See especially E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (1989).

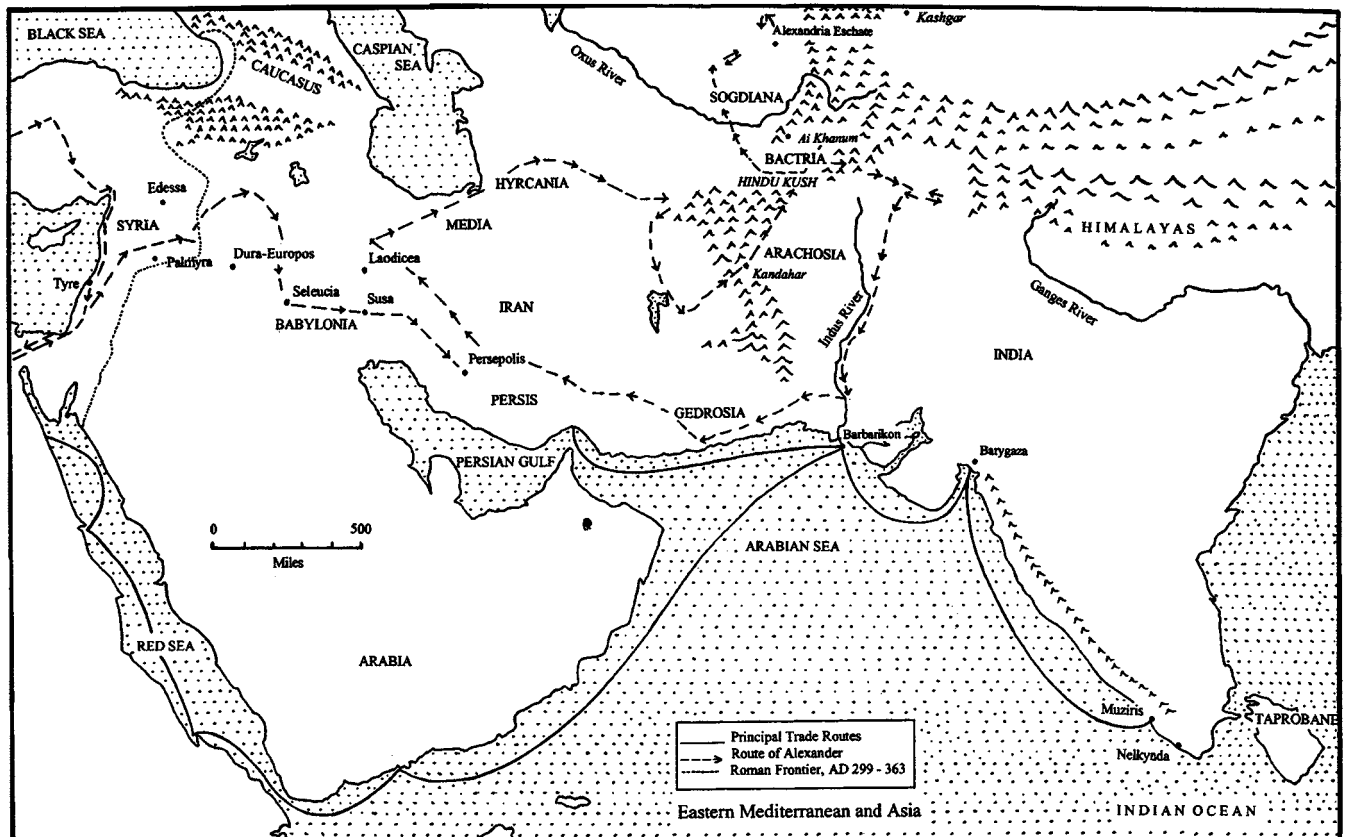
8. Xenophon, *Hellenica* 2, 4, 19 (Loeb ed., vol. I, 239).

9. E.g., Aristotle, *Politics* 7, 7 (1327b).

10. Isocrates, *Pan*. 145–49 (trans. Loeb, vol. I, 211–15).

11. Isocrates, *Address to Philip*, 120 (trans. Loeb, vol. I, 319).

12. For modern accounts, see A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great* (1988); P. Briant, *Alexandre le Grand* [4] (1994).


BLACK SEA
CAUCASUS
CASPIAN SEA
Oxus River
Alexandria Eschate
Kashgar
SOGDIANA
Ai Khanum
BACTRIA
HINDU KUSH
HYRCANIA
MEDIA
Edessa
SYRIA
Palmyra
Dura-Europos
Laodicea
Tyre
Seleucia
Susa
BABYLONIA
IRAN
Persepolis
PERSIS
GEDROSIA
ARACHOSIA
Kandahar
Indus River
HIMALAYAS
Ganges River
INDIA
Barbarikon
Barygaza
PERSIAN GULF
0
500
Miles
ARABIAN SEA
RED SEA
ARABIA
Muziris
TAPROBANE
Nelkynda
Principal Trade Routes
Route of Alexander
Roman Frontier, AD 299 - 363
Eastern Mediterranean and Asia
INDIAN OCEAN

Alexander's conquests may be divided into two distinct phases with markedly different long-term consequences. The first phase, which itself exceeded anything Isocrates had envisaged, may be defined as the termination of the Persian dynasty by the conquest of the parts of the Near East with which the Greeks were familiar—Anatolia (though not all of it at first), Syria, Palestine (hence, with momentous consequences, the small Jewish community), Egypt, and Babylonia, which, as a prosperous settled area with an ancient culture, was one of the heartlands of the Persian Empire[13]—and by the capture of the Achaemenid "capitals," Susa and Ecbatana.

There followed in phase two Alexander's still almost entirely unintelligible expedition across Iran and central Asia to present-day Afghanistan and Tajikistan, before turning south to the Indus Valley, and home again by way of a gruelling march along the northern shores of the Indian Ocean and the eastern shores of the Persian Gulf (see map).[14]

Both phases of conquest had important long-term effects. The first created a "Greek" world in Anatolia, the Levant, and Egypt, and to a lesser degree in Mesopotamia, which lasted for more than a thousand years. The second gave rise to the imperialist and colonialist dreams which were to haunt the Roman Empire from the late Republic into the Christian period, and to complex cultural interchanges, still very little understood, of which the existence of the two Greek Buddhist texts discussed below is a pointed reminder. Alexander's march also marked out the part of Asia with which the classical world would become reasonably familiar, and with which it enjoyed regular contact during the Roman imperial period. Of the area beyond Alexander's march, little or nothing was known.

Viewed from the Mediterranean, the part of the Near East stretching from present-day Turkey to Egypt became, as a result of Alexander's conquests, effectively Greek. Greek culture was dominant, Greek cities and Greek architecture were visible everywhere, and the Greek language used both for monumental inscriptions and perishable documents. The depth of the penetration by Hellenism, the nature of Greek settlement and colonialism, and the character of the principal successor state, the Seleucid kingdom, which inherited many features of the Persian Empire, have all, however, been the

13. See, e.g., M. Stolper, "Mesopotamia, 482–330 B.C.," in J. Boardman et al., eds., *Cambridge Ancient History* IV: *Persia, Greece and the Western Mediterranean c. 525 to 479 B.C.* (1994), 234ff., and P. Briant, *De Cyrus à Alexandre: Histoire de l'empire perse* (1996), esp. 500ff.

14. For this extraordinary episode, covering the years 330 to 324 B.C., see A. Bosworth, *Alexander and the East: The Tragedy of Triumph* (1996), and, for the central Asian context, F. Holt, *Alexander the Great and Bactria: The Formation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia* (1988).

subject of vigorous debate. Owing to the Seleucid monarchy's use of official languages other than Greek (for instance, Aramaic and Akkadian), it has recently been portrayed as a Near Eastern rather than a Greek state in a cultural as well as geographical sense.[15] None the less, the dominance of Greek forms of political organisation and of the Greek language survived the defeat of the Hellenistic kingdoms by the Roman Republic in the second and first centuries B.C., and lasted throughout the Roman imperial period, long after 312, when the emperor Constantine converted to Christianity. The frontier of the Empire lay along the middle and upper Euphrates, until it advanced to take in all, and then (after a defeat by the Sassanid Persians in 363) most, of northern Mesopotamia.

Of course, there is evidence of the continued use of local languages in Anatolia, and of various dialects of Aramaic in Syria, and of Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic in Judaea. The Jewish community was the sole example, however, of a national tradition, embodied in Semitic-language texts, which persisted throughout the Graeco-Roman period. From the third century B.C. onwards, the books of the Hebrew Bible were progressively translated into Greek, making possible the extension of Christianity to gentiles and the writing of Christian Scriptures in Greek. The spread of Christianity in turn promoted the emergence of Christian "languages of culture" other than Greek, for instance, Coptic, Syriac, and Armenian, and of non-Greek forms of Christianity that survive to the present day.[16]

During the classical period itself, with the exception of a few periods of Jewish independence, some long, others short—the Hasmonean state, which freed itself from Seleucid rule step by step from the 160s to 129 B.C. and remained independent until 63 B.C.; the revolt of A.D. 66 to 73; and the Bar Kochba revolt of 132–35—few non-Greek political structures were to be found west of the Euphrates during the millennium from Alexander to Muhammed (the Nabataean kingdom of the first century A.D. would be a partial exception). In the eyes of Graeco-Roman observers, the only local culture and religious tradition which represented anything distinctive, trou-

15. For this thesis, note esp. S. Sherwin-White, "Seleucid Babylonia: A Case Study for the Installation and Development of Greek Rule," in A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White, eds., *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and Non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia* (1987), 1; and, more fully, S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis: A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire* (1993), with a set of discussions in *Topoi* 4 (1994).

16. For a useful survey, M. Albert, ed., *Christianismes orientaux: introduction à l'étude des langues et des littératures* (1993).

bling, or worthy of comment was Judaism.[17] These two statements are true even of Egypt, despite the persistence of Egyptian temples and priests, of monumental (hieroglyphic) and cursive writing in Egyptian, and of Egyptian art and architecture (though Egypt represents too complex and individual a case in cultural history to be explained here). With few exceptions, the Graeco-Roman observer saw the Near East as Greek, marked out by a network of Greek cities and, from the fourth century onwards, by Christian churches and bishoprics.

Anatolia remained Greek and Christian until the Turkish advances of, broadly, the eleventh century. In spite of the settlement there of a Celtic population, the "Galatians," in the third century B.C., the use of Phrygian for public inscriptions in the Roman period, and the persistence of Phrygian and Lycian architectural styles, the cultural and religious history of Anatolia, even of inland areas—let alone the Greek cities along the coast—from the Hellenistic period to the late Empire is the history of Greek culture, in both city and country.[18] The same is true, despite the visibility of Semitic languages, to the south of Anatolia.[19]

To think, when looking at the Near East, of the classical world and Asia as two different worlds, or of the latter as a foreign, "Asian" world as seen from the Mediterranean, is entirely to misconceive the situation. West of the Euphrates, and in some areas east of it, the Near East was a part of the classical world. Our contemporaries who make historic claims to the Holy Land might recall that, for a thousand years, it was part of the Greek world, for seven hundred years was ruled by Rome, and for three hundred years was part of a Christian Greek world.

When we look beyond the Euphrates, the historical framework is profoundly different: classical writers offer representations of societies there which were in various ways "foreign" and "oriental." Alexander's conquests, which marked out the area of which the classical world knew and had continuing contact with, extended to regions characterised by different language groups, social structures, religious systems, and cultures. First was Mesopotamia, particularly the southern part, Babylonia, heir to a long cultural tradition, persisting under successive empires. Writing in Akkadian, using the cuneiform writing system developed from the late fourth millen-

17. See M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors*.

18. See the major work by S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor* I–II (1993).

19. F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993).

nium, persisted throughout the Hellenistic period into the first century A.D.; the latest cuneiform tablet so far known dates to A.D. 74–75, and is thus contemporary with Vespasian.[20] Second, further east, was the vast Iranian plateau, the culture of which is immensely difficult to characterise; it remains an empty space on the map of the cultures of Asia. Third, beyond Iran, was the region classical writers called "Arachosia" and "Bactria," roughly modern Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, in which scattered evidence reveals a powerful imprint of Greek imperialism and colonialism. Finally, there was India (primarily the Indus Valley, now in Pakistan), which attracted more attention and stimulated more ethnographic—or pseudo-ethnographic—writing in Greek and Latin than the other three regions combined: Herodotus and other Greek writers had spoken of India even before Alexander's expedition. The high profile of India was partly the legacy of the detailed accounts left by writers of Alexander's time and of the early Hellenistic period; and it was partly explained by the existence under the Roman Empire of well-established trade routes from the Mediterranean to India, by sea from Egypt, or by a combination of land and sea through Mesopotamia. The sight of a ship setting sail for India had made Trajan think longingly of following in the footsteps of Alexander.

A survey of the relations between the Greek and Roman world and this series of regions should begin by recalling that Alexander had travelled south-east across the Fertile Crescent to Babylonia, Susa, and Persis, then north and north-east to Media and Bactria, and then south again to the Indus Valley. With what conceptions, and with what long-term goals (if any) Alexander and his forces had approached the cultures and societies they encountered, it is hardly possible now to know. It may not be an accident, however, that the clearest and most emphatic *attribution* of a motive to Alexander in classical literature comes from centuries later, and dates to precisely the period of Trajan's campaigns in the East. At that time, Plutarch wrote his *On the Fortune of Alexander*, in which he portrayed Alexander as bearing the benefits of Greek civilisation to the barbarians:

> But if you examine the results of Alexander's instruction, you will see that he educated the Hyrcanians to respect the marriage bond and taught the Arachosians to till the soil, and persuaded the Sogdians to support their parents, not to kill them, and the Persians to respect their mothers and not to marry them. . . . When Alexander was civilising

20. See J. Oelsner, *Materialien zur babylonischen Gesellschaft und Kultur in hellenistischer Zeit* (1986), 54.

> Asia, Homer was commonly read, and the children of the Persians, of the Susianians and of the Gedrosians learnt to chant the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides. . . . Thus Alexander's new subjects would not have been civilised, had they not been vanquished. Egypt would not have its Alexandria, nor Mesopotamia its Seleucia, nor Sogdiana its Prophthasia, nor India Boukephalia, nor the Caucasus (the Hindu Kush) a Greek city near it.[21]

There is no doubt that Alexander, and later the Seleucids, did found many Greek cities in Asia, though predominantly in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Bactria.[22] Those that can be identified in the Iranian plateau are located along the north-eastern edge, like Laodicea in Media; in the south, between the Zagros Mountains and Mesopotamia proper, like Seleucia on the Eulaeus, the ancient Susa; or (probably) on the Persian Gulf, like Antiochia in Persis. The plateau itself, in this respect as in so many others, remains largely a blank. Plutarch's idealising conception that a "civilising mission" had characterised Alexander's campaign and that Greek culture and social norms had been communicated to a variety of Asian societies should not be allowed to colour our analysis of his actions.[23] None the less, even Plutarch, though imperialist in his belief in the superiority of Greek *culture*, does not speak in racialist terms. Greek writing on Asia is not marked by particular attention to physical type or skin colour, or by the attribution of inherent racial characteristics.

If racialism was not a significant factor, both imperialism and colonialism were. Whatever the uncertainties in the evidence, we can be certain that a number of "Alexandrias" and other Greek cities were founded in central Asia, from Alexandria Eschate ("the furthest") in ancient Sogdiana (Tajikistan) to "Alexandria in Arachosia" (Kandahar). One of these Greek cities, whose ancient name is unknown, and whose remains were discovered at a site called Ai Khanum on the banks of the Amu Darya (the Oxus) in Afghanistan, was extensively excavated from 1965 until war brought work to a halt in 1978.[24]

21. Plutarch, *Moralia* 328C–F (trans. Loeb, vol. IV, 393–97).

22. For a very careful review of the complex and confusing evidence for city foundations by Alexander himself in Asia, see P. M. Fraser, *Cities of Alexander the Great* (1996). See also G. M. Cohen, *The Seleucid Colonies: Studies in Founding, Administration and Organisation* (1978).

23. See especially P. Briant, "Colonisation hellénistique et populations indigènes: la phase d'installation," in his *Rois, Tributs et Paysans* (1982), 227ff.

24. Perhaps the best sketch of what is known of the site, from which the discoveries are still being studied, is P. Bernard, "Aï Khanum on the Oxus: A Hellenistic City in Central Asia," *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 53 (1967), 71. For a more up-to-date survey, C. Rapin, "Greeks

With almost too perfect an appropriateness, one of the Greek inscriptions found there contains a set of maxims copied from those set up at Delphi, five thousand kilometres to the west.[25]

The evidence hardly allows us to see what happened to these small, distant Greek cities in rapidly changing circumstances. We know that, in the last years of the fourth century B.C., Seleucus I withdrew from northern India and extensive areas to its north-west ("Gedrosia" and "Arachosia" to the Greeks) before the first king of the Mauryan dynasty, Chandragupta ("Sandrakottos" in Greek texts). In Bactria, further north-east, independent or semi-independent Greek kingdoms arose in the third century B.C. and continued until the second century. The scatter of small Greek inscriptions from central Asia shows that the language remained in use (alongside Aramaic), without telling us whether it was used only by colonists, or by administrators using Greek, or whether its use had spread, as Plutarch's words suggest, widely among non-Greeks. Nothing prepares us for the official use of Greek by Chandragupta's grandson, the renowned king Asoka (probably 265–228 B.C.), a convert to Buddhism, whose great series of moralizing edicts, carved on rock faces or pillars over almost all of India, from south to north, represents the earliest written evidence for the history of the sub-continent.[26] Even though we cannot know who precisely was being addressed, one is still amazed, forty years after the first of the Greek edicts was published, to read Asoka's message as expressed in two Greek inscriptions discovered in Kandahar.

The first edict is accompanied by an Aramaic version, an important fact in itself, and reads as follows:

> Now that ten years have been completed, the king Piodasses [Asoka] has demonstrated piety to men, and from that time on has made men more pious, and everything prospers over all the land, and the king abstains from [eating] living things, and the other men, even such as are the king's hunters and fishermen, have ceased to hunt, and if any are uncontrolled they have ceased from their excess as far as they can, and

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in Afghanistan: Aï Khanum," in J. Descoeudres, ed., *Greek Colonists and Native Populations* (1990), 329.

25. See the evocative paper by L. Robert, "De Delphes à l'Oxus: inscriptions grecques nouvelles de la Bactriane," *CRAI* (1968): 416.

26. See R. Thapar, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*[2] (1997), with two maps at the end showing the distribution of the inscribed edicts. See F. Millar, "Epigraphy," in M. Crawford, ed., *Sources for Ancient History* (1983), 80–136 (= chapter 2 in F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* I: *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution*, on p. 45).

> [are] obedient to their fathers and mothers and their elders to a degree not seen before; and for the future, acting in accordance with all these principles they will conduct themselves in a more desirable and better way.[27]

Less attention has been paid to the second inscription of the pair, published in 1964,[28] a remarkable text only once reproduced for study by classical historians, and none of it, in its Greek version, ever translated into English.[29] The text, containing the end of Edict XII of Asoka and the beginning of Edict XIII—in which he expresses his remorse over the slaughter in the recent war in Kalinga—appears, in this case, only in Greek and has been inscribed on a building block. As Daniel Schlumberger observes, it is an adaptation rather than a literal translation of the Indian versions which are known from elsewhere.

It may be sufficient to translate here the first few lines of Edict XIII, referring to the Kalinga war:

> While Piodasses was in the eighth year of his reign, he conquered Kalinga. There were captured and deported from there 150,000 persons, and another 100,000 were killed, and almost as many others died. From that moment remorse and pity took hold of him, and he was grieved. In the same way as he ordered that men should abstain from [eating] living things, he exercises zeal and effort in the pursuit of piety

27. First published by D. Schlumberger, L. Robert, A. Dupont-Sommer, and E. Benveniste, "Une bilingue gréco-araméenne d'Asoka," *Journal Asiatique* 246 (1958): 1; text reproduced in *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* XX (1964), no. 326, and in J. Pouilloux, *Choix d'inscriptions grecques* (1960), no. 14, with French translation. An English translation can be found also in S. M. Burstein, *The Hellenistic Age from the Battle of Ipsos to the Death of Kleopatra VII* (1985), no. 50.

28. E. Benveniste, "Edicts d'Asoka en traduction grecque," *Journal Asiatique* 252 (1964): 137; D. Schlumberger, "Une nouvelle inscription grecque d'Açoka," *CRAI* (1964): 126. I have not seen D. Schlumberger and E. Benveniste, "A New Greek Inscription of Asoka at Kandahar," *Epigraphia Indica* 37 (1968): 193. French translation in J.-M. Bertrand, *L'Hellénisme 323–31 av. J.-C.* (1992), 63–64.

29. For what seems to be the sole reprinting of the Greek text, see R. Schmitt, "EX OCCIDENTE LUX. Griechen und griechische Sprache im hellenistischen Fernen Osten," in P. Steinmetz, ed., *Beiträge zur hellenistischen Literatur und ihrer Rezeption in Rom* (1990), 41, on 47–49, with German translation. Although an English translation of the relevant edicts (XII and XIII), derived from various versions in Prakrit, is provided in Thapar, *Aśoka* (n. 26), 255–56, this part of the book is a reprint of the original 1961 text, and the translation therefore does not depend on the Greek version.

> [*eusebeia*]. And this the king has felt with still greater displeasure; [that?] such as dwelt there who were Bramenai or Sramenai, or also any others who spend their lives on piety . . . if any of these following such a way of life has died or been deported . . .

To a study of the classical world's relationship with Asia, the edicts and minor inscriptions of Asoka are of greater significance than might be supposed. It is striking enough to read an expression of Buddhist doctrines in Greek. With the exception of the undeciphered Indus Valley Script of the third and early second millennium, the inscriptions of Asoka are, in fact, the earliest written documents from the Indian sub-continent. Apart from Greek and Aramaic, the edicts were written in a set of dialects related to Sanskrit, and called Prakrit; the balance of scholarly opinion is that the two scripts used for the Prakrit versions, namely Kharosthi (confined to the north-west, and always written right to left) and Brahmi (normally written left to right), both derived from Aramaic.[30] Thus, both the languages and scripts used by Asoka suggest that monumental writing in India owed its origins to the influence of the Achaemenid Empire, in which Aramaic was widely used as an official language, and of the Seleucid Empire, in which Aramaic was still used alongside the primary language, Greek.

Elsewhere in his edicts (in the so-called Fifth Major Rock Edict), Asoka does indeed list Greeks as being among the peoples of his empire, and he also refers to "the Greek king named Antiochus" (Antiochus II, 261–246 B.C.). It is unfortunate that the Greek text of Edict XIII breaks off where it does, for here, according to the Prakrit versions, Asoka goes on to refer again to Antiochus, and also to other Hellenistic kings: "and beyond the realm of that Antiochus, in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas and Alexander . . ."[31]

No hint of interaction between Greek thought and Buddhism appears in any pagan classical source, and, in the surviving Greek literature, the earliest mention of the Buddha by name is by the Christian writer Clement of Alexandria at the end of the second century.[32] Classical narratives of the history of

30. See R. G. Salomon, "Brahmi and Kharosthi," in P. T. Daniels and W. Bright, eds., *The World's Writing Systems* (1996), 373.

31. Thapar, *Aśoka* (n. 26), 256. The kings are Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–242 B.C.), Antigonus Gonatas (276–239 B.C.), Magas of Cyrene (dates not quite certain), and (probably) Alexander of Epirus (272–255 B.C.).

32. Clement, *Stromata* 1, 71, 6: "There are among the Indians those who believe in the teachings of Boutta, whom because of his exceptional nobility they have honoured as a

the Greek successor states which replaced the Seleucids in the Bactrian area, and lasted into the second century B.C., are also very slight. It is not worth summarizing here the complex and uncertain sequences of rulers and dynasties which can be worked out, primarily from their exceptionally beautiful and impressive coins with Greek legends.[33] Polybius' narrative of Hellenistic history, fragmentary as it is, does touch on this area, however, in connection with the march into Central Asia by the Seleucid king Antiochus III, "the Great," in the last years of the third century B.C. Polybius represents one of the local Greek kings, Euthydemus, as defending his usurpation of power on the grounds that Seleucid control of the region had broken down earlier, and that threats by nomad invaders meant that if the area were not defended it would soon be "barbarised" (*ekbarbarōthēsesthai*).[34]

Greek rule in Bactria did in the end disappear, though not as immediately as Euthydemus feared. One of the most striking revelations of the past decade is the publication of the first perishable document discovered in a Greek kingdom in Bactria, a Greek parchment, apparently of the first half of the second century B.C. The text, fragmentary as it is, reflects a fully Hellenised regime: "In the joint reign of the God Antimachus and of Eumenes and Antimachus . . . year 4, month Olous, in Asangorna when [. . .] was guardian of the law [*nomophylax*], Menodotus the tax-gatherer [*logeutēs*] . . ."[35] Later in the century, Bactria was conquered by the Sakas or Shakas, whose kings continued to use Greek titles and Greek coin legends. In the meantime, however, Greek rulers, who naturally continued to use Greek on their coinage, had extended their control south of the Hindu Kush mountains to

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god." See A. Dihle, "Indische Philosophen bei Clemens Alexandrinus," in his *Antike und Orient: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (1984), 78, and G. M. Bongard-Levin and S. Karpyuk, "Nachrichten über den Buddhismus in der antiken und frühchristlichen Literatur," in B. Funck, ed., *Hellenismus: Beiträge zur Erforschung von Akkulturation und politischer Ordnung in den Staaten des hellenistischen Zeitalters* (1996), 701.

33. See esp. the classic work of W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*[3] (1985), with preface and bibliography by F. L. Holt; see also R. K. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks* (1957). For a fine selection of these royal coins, see N. Davis and C. M. Kraay, *The Hellenistic Kingdoms: Portrait Coins and History* (1973), chap. 5.

34. Polybius 11, 39 (Loeb ed., vol. IV, 301–3).

35. Published independently by J. R. Rea, A. S. Hollis, and R. C. Senior, "A Tax Receipt from Hellenistic Bactria," *Zeitschr. f. Pap. u. Epig.* 104 (1994): 261, and by P. Bernard and C. Rapin, "Un parchemin gréco-bactrien d'une collection privée," *CRAI* (1994): 261. See C. Rapin, "Nouvelles observations sur le parchemin gréco-bactrien d'Asangôrna," *Topoi* 4 (1996): 458.

the northern part of the Indian sub-continent. It was only in the first century A.D. that both this area and Bactria fell under the rule of the Kushans, who also initially used Greek for their coin legends.[36] John Boardman's study of the diffusion of Greek art shows how profound its influence still was, for instance, on "Gandharan" sculpture and on the earliest sculptural representations of the Buddha, which date to the first century A.D.[37] Perhaps the most striking item is the coin of the Kushan king Kanishka, probably dating to the early second century A.D., which bears a representation of the Buddha on the reverse, accompanied by the Greek legend *BOΔΔO*.[38]

The reign of Kanishka offers some of the most remarkable of all the evidence for the profound and long-lasting influence of Greek in Afghanistan and northern India. His coins show a transition from the use of royal titles in Greek to ones in an Iranian language conventionally labelled "Bactrian." But the script used continues to be Greek, with the addition of one letter, shaped somewhat like a Greek *rho* (*P*), but with the vertical stroke continued upwards, which was used for the sound "sh." A truly remarkable find is an extensive inscription of the first year of Kanishka's reign, found in 1993 at Rabatak in Afghanistan, and written in Bactrian using this version of the Greek alphabet. The text, proclaiming the king's assumption of power, with divine favour, and recounting the cities in northern India which he ruled, records explicitly that "Kanishka the Kushan" (*Kanēshke koshano*) "issued a Greek edict and [then] put it into Aryan." A substantial group of Bactrian documents, one written on copper and the others on perishable materials, dating to the fourth to eighth century, and still using a cursive variant of the same (more or less) Greek alphabet, awaits publication.[39] The edict is evidence of the length of both Greek and Iranian influence in the region. Perhaps only the great inscription of the second Sassanid king, Shapur I (who

36. For an illuminating survey, with extensive illustrations, see E. Errington and J. Cribb, eds., *The Crossroads of Asia: Transformation of Image and Symbol in the Art of Ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan* (1992).

37. J. Boardman, *The Diffusion of Classical Art in Antiquity* (1994), chap. 4, "The East after Alexander."

38. *Boardman* (n. 37), 123 (coin reproduced on 124); Errington and Cribb (n. 36), 199–200.

39. N. Sims-Williams and J. Cribb, "A New Bactrian Inscription of Kanishka the Great," *Journal of the Institute of Silk Road Studies* 4 (1995–96): 75; N. Sims-Williams, "Nouveaux documents sur l'histoire et la langue de la Bactriane," *CRAI* (1996): 633 (also reporting on the later documents). For the first group of these documents, see N. Sims-Williams, *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan*, Pt. 1: *Legal and Economic Documents* (2000).

reigned in A.D. 240–47), surpasses it as testimony to the long-lasting importance of Alexander.

As we have reached the period when both a well-established sea route and a land-sea route linked the Mediterranean with India, it is time to turn back to examine the (paradoxically) less well attested, and more mysterious, relations of the Graeco-Roman world with Iran. The area is geographically closer to the Mediterranean, and its successive rulers either were (for a time) themselves Greek, during the first part of the Hellenistic period, or alternatively were in close contact, and often conflict, with the Graeco-Roman powers, as was the case with Achaemenid Persia, Parthia, and Sassanid Persia. The mystery arises out of the lack of contemporary evidence in any Iranian language. This is true of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, from which the only strictly *Persian* documents are royal inscriptions in Old Persian, written in cuneiform, as were Achaemenid documents in Elamite or Akkadian. Whether there was also an alphabetic (or any other) system for writing Old Persian on perishable materials is a matter of speculation; the thousands of administrative documents known from Persepolis are written mainly in Elamite, but also in Aramaic.

There is an equal silence for the period of Hellenistic control of Iran, and an almost equally complete one from the Parthian period. It was of great political and strategic significance that a little-known Iranian people, the Parthians, replaced the Seleucids in Iran in the early second century B.C. and extended their empire to Babylonia and the middle Euphrates later in the century. The Parthian Empire was to be the main adversary of the Romans in the Near East; Trajan had marched against them on the campaign which took him to the Persian Gulf. Although there is some documentation written on perishable materials or on fragments of pottery, and some coin legends, to show that Parthian, an Iranian language, could be written using the Aramaic alphabet,[40] not a single item of literature in an Iranian language survives from the Parthian period, which lasted for more than four centuries until the 220s A.D., when the Parthian kings were replaced by a new Persian dynasty originating from Fars (Persis) in the south of Iran, the Sassanids.

The Parthians ruled over much the same area as the Seleucids, except that they never conquered Syria, and within their territories Aramaic was widely

40. See P. V. Skjaervo, "Aramaic Scripts for Iranian Languages," in Daniels and Bright (n. 30), 515. The largest group of Parthian texts is represented by more than 2,000 ostraca from Nisa in Turkmenistan; see I. Diakonoff and V. Livshits, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum* II.2: *Parthian Economic Documents from Nisa* I–III, ed. D. Mackenzie (1976–77).

used, as it had been under the Achaemenids and the Seleucids. Akkadian survived in Babylonia at least until towards the end of the first century A.D., and Greek cities, deriving from early Hellenistic colonisation, like Seleucia on the Tigris and Seleucia on the Eulaeus—the ancient Persian city of Susa in Elymais (Elam)—flourished in the Parthian Empire. There was also the (now) famous small Hellenistic settlement of Dura-Europos on the Euphrates, which was excavated, if not exactly by, at any rate under the direction of, Franz Cumont and Mikhail Rostovtzeff in the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, the Parthian Empire was a multi-cultural, or multi-ethnic, world in which the culture least visible to us was that of the Parthians themselves. Although the original documentation surviving from the region in this period is scanty, a significant amount of what there is was written in Greek. In other words, the Parthian Empire was, in one respect, just another late Hellenistic kingdom.

Take, for instance, the two long Greek parchments of the first century B.C. (88–87 and 22–21 B.C., respectively), whose origin E. H. Minns, when publishing them in 1915, describes in terms which now seem striking: "Avroman is a town in Persian Kurdistan lying close to the Turkish Frontier."[41] In fact, the place of origin lies in the foothills of the Zagros, north-north-east of Baghdad, in present-day Iraq. The dating of the earlier of the two parchments perfectly reflects the character both of the Parthian kings as late Hellenistic monarchs and also the power relations of the time: "In the reign of the King of Kings, Arsaces, benefactor, just, manifest, philhellene, and of the Queens, Siace his compaternal sister and wife and Aryazate surnamed Automa, daughter of the great King Tigranes (of Armenia) and his wife . . ." Next, one might cite the inscription of A.D. 21 containing a letter in Greek from the Parthian king, Artabanus III, addressed to the city of Susa on the Eulaeus;[42] or, perhaps more indicative, a series of nine business and legal documents written in Greek on parchment, found in Dura-Europos and dating from the last eighty years of Parthian rule, before the Roman advance of the 160s.[43] Although Dura-Europos was a Greek settlement, this evidence

41. E. H. Minns, "Parchments of the Parthian Period from Avroman in Kurdistan," *Journ. Hell. Stud.* 35 (1915): 22. It seems extraordinary that these two extensive Greek documents, along with one in Parthian, now in the British Museum, have never been re-studied in detail since.

42. C. B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (1934), no. 75.

43. H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *Journ. Rom. Stud.* 85 (1995): 214, nos. 34 and 36 to 43. See also F. Millar, "Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule," in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse* (Historia-Einzelschrift 122, 1998), 473–92 (= chapter 16 in the present volume).

for the conduct of public legal business there in Greek none the less reveals the workings of the Parthian Empire. Equally striking in a different way is the bilingual text from the mid-second century A.D. inscribed on a statue of Herakles to record that the Parthian king Vologaeses IV had taken it as part of the spoils when he captured Mesene at the head of the Persian Gulf and brought it back to Seleucia on the Tigris. The Greek text is accompanied by one in Parthian, written as always in Aramaic letters.[44]

Although Greek was a normal and established language for public documents in the Parthian Empire, the Iranian languages—first Parthian, then Persian proper, then others (apart from "Bactrian," which used Greek letters)—borrowed from Aramaic, the alphabet which they were to use for written texts. This complex evolution is dramatically illustrated by the earliest document of the Sassanid Persian Empire, which replaced the Parthian Empire in the 220s. Shapur I left at Naqsh-i Rustam near Persepolis in southern Iran a long public record of his military and civil achievements, inscribed in Greek, Parthian, and Middle Persian, the latter two again using the Aramaic alphabet, written from right to left.[45] The vast Greek text in which Shapur describes his wars against Rome in the 240s and 250s and explains the principles of his civil government may be regarded as the ultimate testimony to the long-lasting legacy of Alexander's conquests six hundred years earlier.

The late borrowing of an alphabetic script for writing Persian is of crucial importance, as is the fact that for the whole of the Sassanid period, which lasted until the Islamic conquests of the seventh century, we have no contemporary manuscripts of works written in Persian or other Iranian languages, except for Manichaean manuscripts from central Asia.[46] There are literary works of the Islamic period which are written in Persian, and which are claimed to have been compiled in the Sassanid period, or to be based on works of that period, but there are no actual manuscripts. We might contrast

44. Greek text in *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* XXXVII, no. 1403. See esp. P. Bernard, "Vicissitudes au gré de l'histoire d'une statue en bronze d'Héraclès entre Séleucie du Tigre et la Mésène," *Journal des Savants* (1990): 3.

45. See A. Maricq, "Res Gestae Divi Saporis," *Syria* 35 (1958): 295, and now Ph. Huyse, *Die dreisprachige Inschrift Sabuhrs I an der Kala-i Zardust* (1999). See the invaluable examples of the Parthian and Middle Persian scripts used in this inscription which are provided by Skjaervo (n. 40), 522–23. An English translation is given in R. N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (1984), 371–73.

46. See the careful study of the evidence by J. Wiesehöfer, *Das antiken Persien von 550 v. Chr. bis 650 n. Chr.* (1994), 366–68 (a survey of the epigraphic and literary evidence for the Sassanid period); English translation by A. Z. Azodi, *Ancient Persia from 550 to 650 A.D.* (1996), 283–85.

with this silence the long list of ancient papyri with texts, fragmentary or extensive, of Greek (and some Latin) literary works, or the striking series of dated Syriac manuscripts, beginning with one written in Edessa in A.D. 411, now in the British Museum.[47] From Iran there is nothing comparable.

Out of this silence emerges the most remarkable case of the construction, or representation, of an "oriental" religious system by Greek, and later also Roman, writers: Zoroastrianism. It is not claimed here that we can *know* that the conventional account of Zoroaster, of his teaching, and of its diffusion in Iran is a fiction; only that, so far as evidence from antiquity is concerned, our (supposed) knowledge of Zoroastrianism depends entirely, and without exception, on Graeco-Roman representations. However, this view is not conceded in the standard works of reference. P. V. Skjaervo, speaking of the central text of medieval and modern Zoroastrianism, the *Avesta*, remarks: "The oldest Avestan texts are approximately contemporary with the *Rigveda* (second millennium B.C.E.), while the younger texts date from the first millennium B.C.E.; they were transmitted orally and written down only in the mid-Sasanian period, the fifth–sixth centuries C.E. (though the oldest manuscripts date only from the 13th century)."[48]

The history of Zoroaster is, in fact, derived solely from claims made within the Zoroastrian texts themselves; the earliest references to Zoroaster contained in texts in Iranian languages are found in Manichaean writings discovered in central Asia. It is exceedingly difficult to date these manuscripts, or the works which they contain, but none can be earlier than the lifetime of Mani himself, the third century A.D., and most must be much later.[49] The specifically Zoroastrian texts comprise a set of religious writings of the Islamic period which project the figure of Zoroaster, and the story of the *Avesta* as a text, back into the remote past.

The *ancient* evidence for Zoroaster, his date, and his teachings is all, without exception, Graeco-Roman. It begins with Xanthos the Lydian in the late fifth century B.C., who claimed that Zoroaster lived six thousand years before Xerxes invaded Greece, and continues throughout the classical period.[50]

47. See the splendid collection by W. H. P. Hatch, *Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* (1946), which could now be substantially updated.

48. Skjaervo (n. 40), 257.

49. For these texts in English translation, see H. J. Klimkeit, *Gnosis on the Silk Road: Gnostic Texts from Central Asia* (1993). Note, e.g., the "Zarathustra Fragment" (p. 47), and the allusion to Zarathustra in a poem in Parthian on p. 125. No date is suggested for either text or either manuscript.

50. The texts are conveniently collected and discussed by J. Bidez and F. Cumont, *Les*

Classical sources provide by far the earliest representations of Zoroaster as an Iranian sage located in the remote past, whose teachings expressed a dualistic view of the world. The most informative of these texts is a passage from Plutarch's essay *On Isis and Osiris*, a work written in the early second century A.D.:

> The great majority and the wisest of men hold this opinion: they believe that there are two gods, rivals as it were, the one the Artificer of good and the other of evil. There are also those who call the better one a god and the other a daemon, as, for example, Zoroaster the sage, who, they record, lived five thousand years before the time of the Trojan War. He called the one Oromazes and the other Areimanius; and he further declared that among all things perceptible to the senses Oromazes may best be compared to light, and Areimanius, conversely, to darkness and ignorance, and midway between the two is Mithras; for this reason the Persian give to Mithras the name of "Mediator."[51]

The conclusion is obvious. No problem arises from Plutarch's reference to the major Iranian deity, Ahura Mazda, for the great inscription of Darius I, from the late sixth century B.C., written in old Persian, proclaims the king as his worshipper. Neither in this long inscription, however, nor anywhere else in the scanty Iranian evidence from before the early medieval period, is there any allusion to an ancient teacher named Zoroaster.

The reader might reasonably object that the manuscripts of Plutarch's works, too, are medieval. So they are. The fundamental difference, however, is that the texts of classical authors such as Plutarch, while mainly derived from medieval manuscripts, can be tied into a dense interlocking network of ancient papyrus texts and of ancient documents, both papyri and inscriptions, some naming Plutarch himself, as well as many other persons who appear in his *Lives* and *Moral Essays*. In this case, therefore, we can work back from the medieval copy to a known ancient context. With the *Avesta*, we cannot. A series of classical writers ascribe to a very ancient Persian sage named "Zoroaster" a dualistic view of the world. We cannot prove them wrong, but it would be counter to all methodological principles to treat such representa-

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mages hellénisés I–II (1938). See now A. De Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (1997). Note also P. Kingsley, "The Greek Origin of the Sixth-Century Dating of Zoroaster," *Bull. Sch. Or. and Afr. Stud.* 53 (1990): 245, vigorously criticising the Greek tradition—but only (it seems) in favour of a second-millennium date for the "real" Zoroaster.

51. Plutarch, *Moralia* 369D–370D (trans. Loeb text, vol. V, 111–13).

tions as fact. Even in the classical world, not everybody accepted this branch of oriental wisdom without question. Very few, however, showed the scepticism expressed by the great Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry in the third century A.D., in his *Life* of Plotinus: "I, Porphyry, wrote a considerable number of refutations of the books of Zoroaster, which I showed to be entirely spurious and modern, made up by the sectarians to convey the impression that the doctrines which they had chosen to hold in honour were those of the ancient Zoroaster."[52]

Thus, we cannot continue to write the history of "Zoroastrianism," from remote antiquity onwards, on the basis of projections or representations evolved by writers from within the classical world. That is to accept an ancient version of "orientalism," and to absorb it into a modern one.

In the ancient world, as in the modern, Asia functioned as a free-fire zone for the European imagination. Disparagement was not always the result. On the contrary, the imaginations of intellectuals in the classical world were repeatedly fired by visions of different forms of oriental culture and wisdom (some of them justified, like the antiquity of Egyptian civilisation, or the derivation of the Greek alphabet from the Phoenician). In classical representations of oriental wise men, Persian Magi, "Chaldean" or Babylonian astrologers, and Indian Brahmins or "naked sophists" could all play a part.[53] One writer who repeatedly draws on non-Greek, and in particular oriental, sources of wisdom is Porphyry, though he was often sceptical. Some modern scholars take Porphyry himself to be "oriental," on the grounds that he came from Tyre in Phoenicia. There is no evidence, however, that he knew any language other than Greek (and no doubt Latin), whether Syriac, Aramaic, Hebrew, Egyptian, Akkadian, or Persian, or that he had, or could have had, personal knowledge of writings in any of these languages. His view of non-Greek sources of wisdom was formed from images already current within Greek culture.[54]

If we postulate Babylonia as a source of "oriental" learning, however, we are faced with an unresolved puzzle. Documentary evidence shows that for at least four centuries after Alexander's conquest, Greek, Akkadian (still written in cuneiform, though occasionally transliterated into Greek), and also

52. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 16 (trans. Loeb Plotinus, vol. I, 45).

53. Note the monograph by A. D. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenisation* (1976), stressing the limits—above all the linguistic limits—of the real knowledge of other cultures which the Greeks of the Hellenistic period acquired. See also Dihle (n. 32).

54. See F. Millar, "Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language, and Alien Wisdom," in J. Barnes and M. Griffin, eds., *Philosophia Togata* II: *Plato and Aristotle at Rome* (1996), 241–86 (= chapter 13 of the present volume).

Aramaic were in use there. But was there any continuing intellectual exchange, at the level of literature or learning, between the various cultures? There is as yet no way of answering this question.[55]

Paradoxical as it may seem, a more powerful image of India, than of either Iran or Babylonia, is found in the literature of the classical world.[56] India, above all, attracted the attention of the writers who accompanied Alexander. The most influential was Megasthenes, one of the entourage of Alexander's satrap of Arachosia and Gedrosia, roughly southern Afghanistan and Baluchistan, who went on one or more embassies to the Mauryan emperor Chandragupta, probably (as it now seems) at an early stage in his rise to power.[57] Megasthenes' work does not survive in the original but was to be extensively used in later writers: Diodorus in the late Republic; Strabo the geographer in the reign of Augustus; Pliny the Elder in the seventies of the first century A.D.; and above all in the *Indica* of Arrian in the second century A.D. The *Indica*, which is attached to Arrian's account of Alexander's campaigns, is the fullest classical account of India which we have; but it was written four and a half centuries after the event and not long after Trajan's Parthian campaign.[58] Thus, though a considerable quantity of writing about India exists in the classical sources, duly reporting, for instance, on the caste system and the importance of Brahmins, we cannot be certain that the knowledge gained with Alexander was refreshed by continuing observation in the centuries following his death.

There may have been significant exchanges between the classical world and India at the level of culture, myth, philosophical teaching, and religious

55. Note, however, the suggestions in S. Dalley and A. T. Reyes, "Mesopotamian Contact and Influence in the Greek World: Persia, Alexander and Rome," in S. Dalley, ed., *The Legacy of Mesopotamia* (1998), chap. V. For the specific evidence of cuneiform texts provided with Greek transliterations, and the possible wider implications of these texts for cultural history, see M. J. Geller, "The Last Wedge," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 87 (1997): 43.

56. For discussions of the Greek and Latin texts relating to India, see, e.g., A. Dihle, "The Conception of India in Hellenistic and Roman Literature," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 190 (1964): 15, reprinted with additions in his *Antike und Orient* (1984), 89: I was grateful to Grant Parker for drawing my attention to this article. See also K. Karttunen, *India in Early Greek Literature* (1989); N. H. H. Sitwell, *The World the Romans Knew* (1984), chap. 7; J. S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (1992), chap. 3: "The Wonders of the East."

57. See A. B. Bosworth, "The Historical Setting of Megasthenes' *Indica*," *Classical Philology* 91 (1996): 113.

58. The most accessible edition of Arrian's work on Alexander, and the *Indica*, is the excellent two-volume Loeb text and translation by P. A. Brunt (1976–83).

belief; but it is difficult to separate fact from fantasy.[59] In the case of Babylonia, fantasy, or the projection of stereotypes onto an imagined exotic foreign setting, is precisely what we encounter in the remains of a novel of the second century A.D. by Iamblichus, called *Babyloniaca*.[60] Similarly, a representation of a Greek holy man's confrontation with exotic foreign cultures is to be found in Philostratus' historical novel written in the early third century, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, whose hero at one stage journeys through Babylonia to India, before returning to visit Ethiopia and Egypt.[61] As long as the cultural history of Babylonia in the later centuries B.C. and the early centuries A.D. remains to be written, we shall not be able to assess its relationship to classical culture.

Trade between the Mediterranean and Asia in the centuries after Alexander might have been expected to have revised classical stereotypes by supplying real knowledge about Asian states and cultures. So it did, but only in limited and unexpected ways. First, there is no real evidence of an established ancient "Silk Road" running across Iran to western China. The idea that the "Silk Road" existed in the classical period is extraordinarily persistent, as reflected in papers from an international conference on "Palmyra and the Silk Road," held in 1992 and published in 1996.[62] Michal Gawlikowski shows clearly, however, both elsewhere and in this book itself, that the extensive Palmyrene evidence for trade with the East presents it as travelling across Babylonia to the Persian Gulf and then by sea to the region known as "Scythia" (approximately modern Pakistan). No evidence exists showing the Palmyrenes venturing north-eastwards from Babylonia, to traverse Iran and central Asia.[63]

Nor, to summarise an argument developed in more detail elsewhere,[64]

59. For a full exploration of all the possibilities, without however much critical caution, see J. W. Sedlar, *India and the Greek World* (1980). For a more sober, methodologically aware, approach, see J. S. Romm (n. 56).

60. For a translation of Iamblichus, *A Babylonian Story* (which survives only in epitome), by G. N. Sandy, see *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. B. P. Reardon (1989), 783.

61. For a translation, see the Loeb edition, ed. F. C. Conybeare, I–II (1912). For an analysis of the work as a fictional representation of a pagan holy man, in which travel, both within the Greek world and outside it, is essential, see J. Elsner, "Hagiographic Geography: Travel and Allegory in the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*," *Journ. Hell. Stud.* 117 (1997): 22.

62. *Palmyra and the Silk Road*, published as a special issue of *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* 42 (1996).

63. M. Gawlikowski, "Palmyra as a Trading Centre," *Iraq* 56 (1994): 27; "Palmyra and Its Caravan Trade," *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* (1996): 139.

64. F. Millar, "Caravan Cities: The Roman Near East and Long-Distance Trade by Land,"

does any other classical evidence point to an established central Asian trade route. One Greek work of the early first century A.D. has been thought to do so: the *Parthian Stations* of Isidorus of Charax, which the only available English edition and translation describes in its subtitle as "an account of the overland *trade route* between the Levant and India."[65] In fact, this short text is a description of the main official and military route though the Parthian Empire, starting from the crossing of the Euphrates at Zeugma (at the time the accepted boundary between the Roman and Parthian empires), and continuing south-east to Babylonia, north-east across Iran, then south-east again, to end at "Alexandropolis, the metropolis of Arachosia" (Kandahar): "so far stretches the dominion [*epikrateia*] of the Parthians." A traveller who continued on his journey would have arrived, as the subtitle of the English edition implies, in India or rather, modern Pakistan, not at the borders of China, which lie more than a thousand kilometres north-east of Kandahar, beyond the Hindu Kush and the Pamirs. Thus, the historical existence of an established "Silk Road" in the centuries between Alexander and Shapur I remains an open question.

Since, by contrast, we can be certain that trade did cross Syria, go down the Euphrates to Babylonia and the gulf, and continue by sea to India, it may seem all the more surprising that we understand so little of Babylonia in the last centuries B.C. and the first centuries A.D., either from reasonably well-informed classical sources or from local evidence. If political circumstances ever allow the continuation of archaeological and documentary work in Iraq, a study of the region from Alexander to Muhammed would be of exceptional interest, both for the clash of cultures (Akkadian, Iranian, Aramaic, Graeco-Roman) and for religious history. Christianity was certainly established in Babylonia by the end of the second century, and it was from an Aramaic-speaking region of southern Babylonia that Mani, "the apostle of Jesus Christ," arose to preach his heretical, dualistic version of Christianity in the third century A.D. Although the Roman emperors, Diocletian and Maximian, denounced Manichaeism as "arising from the Persian race which is hostile to us," the context and setting of Mani's early preaching was not Iranian at all, but Aramaic.[66] Moreover, the long-established Jewish commu-

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in M. Austin, J. Harries, and C. Smith, eds., *Modus Operandi: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Rickman* (*BICS* supp. 71, 1998), 119–37 (= chapter 11 of the present volume).

65. W. H. Schoff, *Parthian Stations by Isidore of Charax: An Account of the Overland Trade Route between the Levant and India in the First Century BC. The Greek Text with a Translation and Commentary* (1914).

66. See P. Brown, "The Diffusion of Manichaeism in the Roman Empire," *Journ. Rom.*

nity of Babylonia produced, in the fifth century A.D., "the" Talmud, written in Aramaic, which has shaped Judaism ever since.[67] It represents by far the largest body of evidence for the Aramaic of Babylonia.

As it is, the history of Babylonia from Alexander the Great to Muhammad remains to be written, as does the history of Iran. If we are seeking concrete relationships between the classical world and Asia, we find them only in the early Roman Empire of the first century A.D., and primarily with India. Reports of embassies arriving from India to see Augustus, or of one from Taprobane (Sri Lanka) coming to see Claudius, do not tell us much.[68] Real information is supplied by one of the most interesting of all texts relating to the social and economic history of the ancient world, the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* or *Voyage around the Red Sea*, written in Greek between A.D. 40 and 70.[69] The "Red Sea" (*Eruthra Thalassa* in Greek) in this context means the Indian Ocean, not only the branch of it which we call the "Red Sea." This work, brilliantly edited and translated by Lionel Casson, is a guide to trade routes starting from the east coast of Egypt and going both down the East African coast and also eastwards, past the mouth of the Persian Gulf, to the region for which the anonymous author (like the relevant Palmyrene inscriptions) uses the term "Scythia," and then all the way down the west coast of India to the ports of Muziris and Nelkynda. "Scythia" is marked, according to the author, by the great river Sinthus (the Indus) flowing out to the sea. The main port is described as having a Greek name, "Barbarikon"; among the goods

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Stud. 59 (1969): 92; S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*[2] (1992). See now also S. N. C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in Central Asia and China* (1998).

67. For the Babylonian Talmud in relation to its geographical and social environment, see A. Oppenheimer, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period* (1983).

68. For embassies from India, see Augustus' own report in his *Res Gestae* 31: "To me embassies on behalf of kings were often sent from India, never previously witnessed before any Roman *dux* [general]," and the description by Nicolaus of Damascus, quoted in Strabo's *Geography* 15, 1, 73, 719 (trans. Loeb, vol. VII, 125–27), of an Indian embassy at Antioch on its way to see the Emperor. For the embassy from Sri Lanka, see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 6, 22–24/84–91 (trans. Loeb, vol. II, 401–9). See F. Millar, "Government and Diplomacy in the Roman Empire during the First Three Centuries," *International History Review* 10 (1988): 345–77 (= chapter 10 in F. Millar, *Rome, the Greek World, and the East* II: *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*, 220).

69. L. Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei: Text with Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (1989). For the interrelated questions of the date of the *Periplus* and of the political circumstances in the Indian sub-continent to which it alludes, see J. Cribb, "Numismatic Evidence for the Date of the 'Periplus,' " in D. W. Macdowell, S. Sharma, and S. Garg, eds., *Indian Numismatics, History, Art and Culture: Essays in Honour of Dr. P. L. Gupta* (1992), 131.

traded there were Chinese pelts (*Sirika dermata*). Further south lay another port, Barygaza (modern Broach), and the *Periplus* gives a revealing account of political relations in its hinterland:

> Inland behind Barygaza there are numerous peoples: the Aratrioi, Arachusioi, Gandaraioi, and the peoples of Proklais, in whose area Bukephalos Alexandreia is located. And beyond these there is a very warlike people, the Bactrians (Kushans) under a king. . . . Alexander, setting out from these parts, penetrated as far as the Ganges (a widespread myth) but did not get to Limyrike and the south of India. Because of this, there are to be found on the market in Barygaza even to-day old drachmas engraved with the inscriptions, in Greek letters, of Apollodotus and Menander, rulers who came after Alexander. (chap. 47, trans. Casson)

Extensive archaeological discoveries of Roman pottery and coins amply confirm the reality of trade from the Roman Empire to India.[70] But the author, in talking about trade, also notes instances of the distinctive religious customs of India. For instance, he remarks of the port of "Komar" (Comorin): "in it men who wish to lead a holy life for the rest of their days remain there celibate; they come there and they perform ablutions" (chap. 58, trans. Casson). Most significant here is chapter 64, towards the end, which both contains the earliest classical reference to the name of China ("Thina") and explains that Chinese trade goods, including silk, were transported southwards to the Indian Ocean by one of two routes: either down to the west coast through Barygaza, or eastwards down the Ganges to the Bay of Bengal, and then by way of "Limyrike" (the southern part of the west coast) and the ports of Muziris and Nelkynda. "Thina" is portrayed as "a very great inland city," which we might locate in Kashgar in the extreme west of modern China. The journey from China was difficult and rarely undertaken: "It is not easy to get to this Thina; for rarely do people come from it and only a few." The author has no conception of a vast *country* called China.

The *Periplus*, full of fascinating details, confirms that in the first century A.D. there was an established pattern of seaborne trade from the Roman Empire to India, whose west coast was well known by traders sailing from

70. See P. J. Turner, *Roman Coins from India* (1989); J. Cribb and P. J. Turner, "Numismatic Evidence for the Roman Trade with Ancient India," in J. E. Reade, ed., *The Indian Ocean in Antiquity* (1996), 309; V. Begley and R. D. De Puma, *Rome and India: The Ancient Sea Trade* (1991); R. Thapar, "Black Gold: South Asia and the Roman Maritime Trade," *South Asia* 15 (1992): 1.

Egypt. Whether or not a "Silk Road" also existed in the period, its existence is not necessary to explain how Chinese silk reached the Mediterranean. Silk was one of the commodities regularly carried by sea from India and one which could also have been transported up the Persian Gulf to the Euphrates, thence overland to the Mediterranean by way of Palmyra, where Chinese silk has been found.[71]

The existence of the seaborne trade in luxuries did not pass unnoticed in Rome; for Pliny the Elder, writing in the 70s of the first century A.D., worries about the drain of currency required to pay for it, and mentions figures of 50 million or 100 million Roman sesterces.[72] It is easy to treat such figures as ideological projections of the sort already discussed, or as moralising exaggerations, as they are by Moses Finley in his oft-quoted work on the ancient economy.[73] But caution is in order. We may not wish to believe the report in Strabo's *Geography* that, at the end of the first century B.C., 120 ships made the voyage to India each year.[74] But even if the number is halved, or a quartered, documentary evidence obliges us to re-examine Pliny's figures. A Greek papyrus from Egypt first published in 1985 contains a contract for the transport of goods from the Red Sea coast of Egypt to Koptos on the Nile, and then down-river to Alexandria.[75] Here is the western, land-based, continuation of the trade routes described in the *Periplus*. But the papyrus also provides a glimpse of trade in the eastern and southern section of the Indian Ocean. The second half of the document concerns the repayment of loans for which a written agreement had been drawn up earlier—"in the agreements concerning a loan [made] at Muziris." Some of the cargo of the *Hermapollon*, the ship mentioned, must therefore have originated from Muziris, situated in the south of India, and the "agreements" (*syngraphai*) referred to will have been drawn up there in Greek. Among the goods carried was "Gangetic nard," which must have been shipped from Bengal round modern-day Cape Comorin before being loaded at Muziris for the voyage to Egypt. The most striking item in the document, however, is the figure given for the total value of the *Hermapollon*'s cargo: 1,154 talanta and 2,852 drachmae in silver,

71. See A. Stauffer, "Textiles from Palmyra: Local Production and the Import and Imitation of Chinese Silk Weavings," *Annales Archéologiques Arabes Syriennes* (1996): 425.

72. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 6, 101 (50 million sesterces); 12, 84: "India, Seres (China?) and that peninsula (Arabia) take from our empire each year 100 million sesterces" (trans. Loeb, vol. IV, 63).

73. M. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*[2] (1985), 132.

74. Strabo, *Geography* 1, 5, 12, 118 (Loeb ed., vol. I, 453).

75. See, e.g., L. Casson, "New Light on Maritime Loans: P.Vind. G 40822," *Zeitschr. f. Pap. u. Epig.* 84 (1990): 195.

equivalent to 7 million Roman sesterces. Only a small number of ships of the size of the *Hermapollon* would have been required to match even the larger of the figures given by Pliny the Elder. When reading the papyrus, we are not in the realm of fantasy, but in the real world of the author of the *Periplus*.

Nothing stated here should be taken as offering a clear disproof of ideas or notions entertained in the modern world. A "Silk Road" across central Asia may have existed, and the Iranians may have been imbued with dualistic conceptions of the world, which perhaps influenced Judaism, during the Captivity or after, or lay behind Mani's heretical preaching. The study of the social, cultural, and religious history of ancient Iran, however, has hardly begun, and nor can we yet place the Greek inscriptions of central Asia, including the two Buddhist proclamations of Asoka, in a historical setting. Only with the seaborne trade of the first century A.D. do we place our feet on firm ground.

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PART III

Jews and Others

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Porphyry: Ethnicity, Language, and Alien Wisdom[*]

Porphyre connaissait bien l'Orient. Il devait parler l'idiome de son pays, peut-être même se piquait-il de comprendre l'hébreu. Il était versé dans les mystères de la Chaldée, de la Perse et de l'Égypte. On le voit décrire et interpréter une sorte d'hiéroglyphe, et manier les livres sacrés et la littérature profane des Juifs comme des Phéniciens.

—J. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre* (1913), 9

Porphyry was born in about 232, the year when Plotinus started to study philosophy at Alexandria. His parents were well-to-do Syrians, and he spent most of his boyhood, so far as we know, in the busy Phoenician city of Tyre. Even if he did not travel he had ample opportunity there to make the far from superficial acquaintance with the mystery cults and magical practices of the Middle East and beyond which his writings were to show. He probably knew several languages by the time he came to the West.

—C. Lloyd, "Porphyry and Iamblichus," in A. H. Armstrong, ed., *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (1967), 283

Porphyry did not have to make up these exegeses himself. He came from Tyre, and his native language was Syriac. He got his exegesis of

[*]First published in J. Barnes and M. T. Griffin, eds., *Philosophia Togata* II: *Plato and Aristotle at Rome* (Oxford, 1997), 241–62.

I am indebted for very valuable comments and corrections to Jonathan Barnes, Gillian Clark, and Leofranc Holford-Strevens.

> Daniel from Syrian exegetes, perhaps Jews as well as Christians. Unfortunately the first Syrian writer on Daniel whose work has survived was Aphrahat, whose fifth Demonstration was composed in A.D. 337.
>
> —M. Casey, "Porphyry and the Origin of the Book of Daniel," *JThSt* 27 (1976): 11–33, on 23

A Problem of Identity

Does Porphyry, the important Neoplatonist of the third century, really belong in a volume dedicated to "Plato and Aristotle at Rome"? Should we not instead interpret his works as the product of an "oriental" culture and mentality, which produced a significant re-formulation of the legacy of classical Greek philosophy? The answer cannot be simple, and the texts cited above ought to be sufficient to illustrate how preconceptions about the "Orient" have been used as the starting point for interpretations of Porphyry's works. Yet, on the other hand, there is much, both in the nature of his works and even in the plain facts of his biography, to suggest that we can and should see him as a late Platonist who belonged, literally and figuratively "in Rome." Porphyry was the pupil and successor of Plotinus, and after Plotinus' death was recognised as the leading philosopher of his time. He was a Platonist by profession, but he held that Aristotle's thought could largely be reconciled with Platonism, and wrote numerous commentaries on Aristotle's works, which had an immense influence on all subsequent scholarship. All his works were written in Greek, and there is no categorical proof that he knew, or could write in, any other language. If he did know any other languages, the most probable candidate is Latin. For, as we shall see below, his native city, Tyre, had been a Roman colony since the 190s. All his works were written between the 260s and the early years of the fourth century, either in Rome or in Sicily.

Yet all modern scholars who have studied the works of Porphyry have rightly felt that we ought if possible to understand his original local context, and to ask if there is something distinctively "oriental" in his thought. In themselves, these presuppositions are wholly justified, and are supported by the fact that two other important Greek philosophers of the mid-imperial period also came from the same region: Numenius, in the later second century, from the major city of Apamea on the Orontes, and Iamblichus from the small city of Chalcis, which lay between Apamea and Beroea, on the edge of the Syrian steppe.

All three, however, wrote solely in Greek; whether there is evidence

that any of them had any knowledge of any language other than Greek remains to be seen. The interpretation of the thought of any one of them in terms of the influence of a local culture, language, or intellectual tradition is something which has to be conducted with extreme care. The three passages quoted above demonstrate with painful clarity how loosely terms denoting ethnicity and cultural affiliation can be used—and not only used in passing, but deployed as the bases of interpretation. What is meant, or what should be meant, by "l'idiome de son pays"—"the native language of his land"; "Syrian"; "Phoenician"; "Middle East"; "Syriac"; or "Syrian exegetes"? The problem is even more profound if we consider the imputed knowledge of other cultures and languages which were native to regions outside the Roman province of Syria (or, in Porphyry's lifetime, two provinces, "Syria Coele" and "Syria Phoenice"). First there are areas which formed part of the Roman Empire. As we will see, a fundamental confusion is already built into the second and third passages, for Syriac in the third century is in fact characteristic not of the Roman province(s) called "Syria," but of the province of Mesopotamia, conquered in the 190s by Septimius Severus. But what of Judaea, now called "Syria Palaestina"? Do we have any reason to think that any pagan intellectuals could read Hebrew? Then there is Egypt: what would count as acquaintance with "the mystery cults . . . of Egypt"?

Far greater problems attend the question of defining putative cultures in the regions beyond the borders of the Empire (though whether "the mystery cults and magical practices of the Middle East" is intended to embrace areas both inside and outside the Empire is not quite clear).

All these difficulties have to be explored, for otherwise (as is all too evident) the interpretation of Porphyry's writings, as of those of other philosophers from the Syrian region, will be based on unexamined assumptions about cultural and linguistic patterns, and therefore be quite unsound. The brief survey of the context offered here is based on the author's *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993), which was intended precisely to draw a "map" of the Roman provinces of Syria, Mesopotamia, Judaea / Syria Palaestina, and Arabia, first in terms of language, as attested by documentary and literary evidence, and then of "ethnicity," as claimed or imputed by contemporaries. Its approach was thus severely empirical, and was designed, not—as is in any case impossible—to prove negatives (for instance, that a particular language was *not* in use at a particular time or place), but to show the limits of what we know now: that we have actual evidence for the use of a particular language only in particular places and at particular times. Suppositions about wider use are themselves hypotheses, which might of course receive support at any time from new evidence. But such suppositions, until sup-

ported, must on no account serve as the bases for interpreting the thought of Porphyry, or of other philosophers.

The bare facts of Porphyry's life are that he was born in the early 230s, apparently in his native city of Tyre; at some stage he was in Greece, and he then joined Plotinus in Rome in 262/3. In 267/8 he moved to Sicily, but returned to Rome at some unknown date before his death in the early years of the fourth century. There is thus no evidence that he lived in Tyre at any time after his twenties; as noted above, all his known works were written in Greek.

The first question which arises is therefore that of what presumptions we are entitled to make about the linguistic and educational background, and the wider cultural context, of someone born in Tyre in the 230s.

Tyre and Phoenicia

Tyre, even more than the other long-established cities of the Phoenician coast, exhibits a complex combination of continuity and drastic change.[1] Like the other cities, it had transformed itself into a Greek city in the Hellenistic period, while retaining longer than the others the custom of having its own coins inscribed with legends in the Phoenician language. These Phoenician legends seem indeed to have continued up to the moment of its further transformation—when in the 190s Septimius gave it the status of a Roman colony. This was the same moment at which "Phoenice" became part of the official name, "Syria Phoenice," of the southern section of the Roman province of Syria.

No inscriptions or examples of writing on perishable materials (papyrus or parchment) in Phoenician are known from any time after the very beginning of the imperial period. Our most extended, if highly problematic, evidence for a continuing Phoenician culture, and knowledge of the language, comes from the *Phoinikika* of Herennius Philo of Byblos, written in Greek early in the second century A.D., and claiming to be based on the work of a Phoenician writer called "Sanchuniathon" of the later second millennium B.C.[2]

1. See M. Chéhab, "Tyr à l'époque romaine," *Mél. Univ. St. Joseph* 38 (1962): 11; F. Millar, "The Phoenician Cities: A Case-Study of Hellenisation," *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 29 (1983): 55 (= chapter 2 of the present volume); F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993), chap. 8; F. Briquel-Chatonnet, "Les derniers témoignages sur la langue phénicienne en Orient," *Rivista di studi fenici* 19 (1991): 3.

2. Text in F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, no. 290, used in the translations and commentaries by H. W. Attridge and R. A. Oden, *Philo of Byblos: The Phoenician History* (1981), and by A. I. Baumgarten, *The Phoenician History of Philo of Byblos* (1981).

In intellectual character, the work is indisputably Greek, following Euhemerist ideas of the origin of the gods, and combining elements drawn from Phoenician and Egyptian traditions. But it does also, beyond question, show some knowledge of individual terms and of divine names in Phoenician. This work was known to Porphyry, who quotes from it in the second book of his *On Abstinence*: "In major crises, such as wars or plagues or droughts, the Phoenicians used to make a sacrifice dedicated to Kronos, from those dearest to them. There are abundant examples of such sacrifices in the *Phoinikikē Historia* which Sanchuniathon wrote in the Phoenician language, and Philo the Byblian translated into Greek in eight books."[3] Eusebius, who quotes this passage, also attests that Porphyry referred to Sanchuniathon, and to Philo's translation, in his *Against the Christians*.[4] Neither passage, however, shows that Porphyry knew anything other than Philo's Greek version; whether he will none the less have read this piece of Phoenician tradition differently from any other Greek intellectual of his time remains to be discussed.

Some four decades before Porphyry's birth, there had occurred the transformation of Tyre into a Roman colony, among the earliest of a long series of such transformations which in the next half-century were to affect numerous cities in the Near Eastern provinces, and to produce even greater ambiguities in "ethnicity" and cultural identity than were already present.[5] Colonial status ought to have entailed the public use of Latin (whether it stimulated in any way the personal use of Latin in daily life, or the reading of Latin literature, remains quite obscure); it certainly brought with it a restructuring of the local constitution, henceforward headed by two annual *duoviri* (a board of two magistrates), more often visible, in Greek translation, as two *stratēgoi*.

There seems to be nothing in Porphyry's works which suggests any acquaintance with Latin culture or even (strictly speaking) any knowledge of Latin. It is paradoxical, therefore, that such knowledge is exhibited by a Tyrian who had been born at least a couple of decades before the grant of colonial status, the jurist Ulpian. As is well known, he speaks with pride of the long history of his *patria*, and of its acquisition of colonial status.[6] We can be certain also that he came from an established family of Greek-speaking

3. *De abst*. 2, 56, 1, also quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 4, 16, 6.

4. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 1, 19, 20 (Porphyry, *FGrH*, no. 260, F. 34 = Philo, *FGrH*, no. 790, F. 1).

5. F. Millar, "The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations," in H. Solin and M. Kajava, eds., *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies on Roman History* (1990), 7 (= chapter 8 of the present volume).

6. *Dig*. 50, 15, 1.

Oulpianoi in Tyre. For one such Oulpianos is a participant in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai* (The Learned Diners), and is moreover treated there as, in part, a representative of Phoenician tradition. For, instance, one of the other participants speaks of words which are found only rarely, "unless in the works of those who have written *Phoinikika*, Sanchuniathon and Mochos, your fellow citizens."[7] It is worth noting, however, in view of the modern attributions of ethnicity quoted at the beginning, that at one point Oulpianos is described as a "Syrian" (*Syros*).[8] The family of Oulpianoi certainly continued in Tyre, for one of its members, a Christian, was martyred there in the early fourth century.[9]

An awareness of the ancient history of Tyre, *but as envisaged within Graeco-Roman culture*, can be proved beyond doubt for the third-century colony. For its coinage, with legends in both Greek and Latin, shows Dido, Cadmus, and Europa.[10] Do we have any reason to believe that the Phoenician language was still used? There are two possible hints. One comes from Ulpian himself, discussing whether an *obligatio* in Roman law could be created by a verbal undertaking in Greek, or in another language (*sermo*)—"perhaps Punic or Assyrian" (*Poenum forte vel Assyrium*).[11]

Given the indeterminacy and fluidity of ancient labels for languages and ethnic identities, there can be no certainty as to which languages are referred to. But *Assyrius sermo* ought to be either the Aramaic used, in various dialects, in the two provinces of Syria, as well as Syria Palaestina and Arabia, or perhaps specifically the dialect and script of Aramaic which we call "Syriac," used in Mesopotamia (as Nöldeke showed long ago, *Assyrios/us* as used by Graeco-Roman writers has nothing to do with "Assyria" proper—in this period part of the Sassanid Empire—and is used simply as a variant for *Syros/us*).[12] So, if *Assyrius sermo* refers to the Aramaic of any part of the Roman provincial area, it is quite possible that *Poenus sermo* is Phoenician, rather than the neo-Punic still in use in the province of Africa.

That remains, however, no more than a hypothesis. If our concern is to ask in what sense Porphyry should be understood as "Phoenician," we have

7. Athenaeus, *Deipn*. 126A.

8. Athenaeus, *Deipn*. 669B.

9. Eusebius, *Mart. Pal*. 5, 1: "A youth in the city of the Tyrians with the name Oulpianus."

10. F. Millar, *Roman Near East* (n. 1), 292.

11. *Dig*. 45, 1, 4. Cf. A. Wacke, "Gallisch, Punisch, Syrisch oder Griechisch statt Latein?," *ZRG* 110 (1993): 14–59.

12. Th. Nöldeke, "*ΑΣΣΥΡΙΟΣ, ΣΥΡΙΟΣ, ΣΥΡΟΣ*," *Hermes* 5 (1871): 443; see F. Millar, *Roman Near East* (n. 1), 227, 454ff.

to admit that simple and concrete criteria offered by language use provide no answer. There is no conclusive evidence that Phoenician was still spoken or written in Tyre in the third century, or that an older Phoenician literature, whatever its content might have been, could still be read in its original Phoenician.

The search for traces of the local languages in fact produces results which are quite clear and are generally characteristic of the two provinces of Roman Syria: Syria Coele (the northern section, with a south-eastern extension down the Euphrates to Dura-Europos); and Syria Phoenice, which extended eastwards from the traditionally Phoenician coast, to include Emesa, Damascus, and Palmyra, and (it seems) reached the Euphrates south of Dura. With the exception of Palmyra (and, in a different way, the Euphrates zone, including Dura), the evidence for current use of Semitic languages is confined to the appearance in Greek transliteration of individual names for places, individuals and deities. Examples of the latter are the divine name "Zeus Madbachos" (Zeus the altar), found in the limestone massif of northern Syria, and "Elagabalos/us" as the name of a deity at Emesa, certainly derived from the name of the deity 'LH'GBL, attested in Palmyrene script within the Palmyrene zone.

This general limitation has to be borne in mind when we look at two items of evidence which might suggest a knowledge of Phoenician by Porphyry. The first is the report quoted in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, speaking of works of Phoenician theology: "They offer guarantees of their propositions from the appellations of the gods still prevailing to this day in the cities and villages of Phoenicia and the explanations of the mysteries celebrated among each people."[13] The first problem with the passage is that (as so often) it is not clear whether the final comment comes from Eusebius himself or is quoted from Porphyry. None the less, in either case it is highly significant. The reference to the "appellations of the gods," it is true, implies no more than what is visible throughout the Near East, the reproduction in Greek (and often Latin) transliteration of divine names of Semitic origin. But the reference to the interpretation of "mysteries" enacted in the cities and villages of Phoenicia does imply the persistence of distinctive local cult forms, beliefs, and tradition. If this is valid, we still, however, lack any access to these.

The other, much-quoted, item, is the evidence on the successive forms of name used by Porphyry, beginning with his own testimony in his *Life* of Plotinus. Here he describes himself as "Porphyrios, Tyrian," but later goes into

13. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 1, 10, 55.

more detail on his name: "He [Amelius] dedicated it to me under the name of Basileus [King]. Basileus was in fact my name, for in my native language [*patrios dialektos*] I was called Malkos . . . and if one translates Malkos into Greek it is interpreted as Basileus" (Loeb trans.).[14] Rather curiously, nothing in this passage serves to explain how or why "Porphyrios" came to be the name under which his works circulated. An explanation of this is provided only by Eunapius, writing a century or so after Porphyry's death: "Porphyrios' native city was Tyre, the foremost city of the ancient Phoenicians. . . . In [this] city of *Suroi* Porphyrios was at first called Malchos (the meaning of this is "King"). But Longinus named him "Porphyrios" (purple), using this appellation to indicate the royal significance of such clothing."[15]

What emerges from these passages is at least the clear indication that Porphyry began life with a Semitic name, often found in Greek transliteration. (As he was a Roman citizen, because of being a citizen of a colony, this should have been his *cognomen*, and he ought to have had a Roman *nomen* and, in theory, also a *praenomen*). The history of Romanised names in the Greek East is extremely complex, but it is most likely that "Porphyrios/us" became attached to his name as an *agnomen* or nickname; hence he will have been, formally, "(*praenomen*), (*nomen*) Malchus Porphyrius," with the latter element coming to be the one which he used *qua* author, and by which he was referred to.[16] Given that it was Septimius Severus who gave Tyre the status of a colony, it is quite probable that, if Porphyry turned up in an inscription, it would be as "L. Septimius Malchus."

Though Porphyry's own testimony, when taken literally, reveals no more than that he knew that "Malchos" (derived from MLK) meant "king," it does of course also show that he was aware of a *patrios dialektos*. There, however, our evidence stops. We do not know whether this "language" was still spoken in Tyre, and if so whether in educated circles or only in lower-class ones. Neither for the third century nor for the preceding period have we any concrete proof that Phoenician was used on perishable materials, for writing contracts, marriage agreements, or letters. Though no negative generalisations can be proved, it should be stressed that such evidence *is* now available,

14. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 7, 17.

15. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, 455–56.

16. These questions of evolving nomenclature are not trivial, for they affect issues of ethnic and cultural self-identification, and also (on our part) serious problems of determining by what name individuals were identified. See, for example, A. Cameron, "The Date and Identity of Macrobius," *JRS* 56 (1966): 25. For an excellent survey, see B. Salway, "What's in a Name? A Survey of Roman Onomastic Practice from c. 700 B.C. to A.D. 700," *JRS* 84 (1994): 124.

from the Roman imperial period, for Hebrew, Palestinian Aramaic, Nabataean, Palmyrene, and Syriac.[17]

It therefore remains an open question whether Phoenician was still spoken, or whether written Phoenician was still used in daily-life contexts (as Ulpian's reference to *Poenus sermo* may imply). *A fortiori* it is uncertain whether new literary, religious, or philosophical texts could still be written in Phoenician, or indeed, strictly speaking, whether there ever had been such texts.[18] Again, it should be stressed that neither hypothesis is a wholly empty one. For, as is obvious, within Jewish culture it was the case both that there were inherited texts in Hebrew and Jewish Aramaic which were still in circulation, and that new texts (most obviously the Mishnah) were still being generated in the third century. Precisely in this period also, a Christian literature in Syriac was coming into existence in Roman Mesopotamia; the *Book of the Laws of Countries*, a sub-Platonic dialogue in which Bardesanes plays the main role, is the best-known example.[19]

Contrary to what is asserted in one of the passages quoted at the head of this chapter, Porphyry's "native language" (if he had a native language other than Greek) was not "Syriac" (a term which designates precisely—and in this period only—the dialect and script of Aramaic used along the Euphrates and to its East, in Mesopotamia), but Phoenician, a language closely related to Hebrew. It remains, however, possible that a dialect of Aramaic was also current in Phoenicia in parallel with Phoenician (just as both Hebrew and Aramaic were in Syria Palaestina), and conceivable therefore that an educated person from Tyre might have been able to understand spoken Syriac, or to read works written in it. Writing book 4 of his *Ecclesiastical History*, probably still within Porphyry's life-time, Eusebius (from Caesarea in Syria Palaestina) refers in detail to Bardesanes' works and to Greek translations of them: "In the same reign heresies multiplied in Mesopotamia. A man of great ability, and skilled in argument in the language of the *Syroi*, Bardesanes, after composing dialogues against the Marcionites and various leaders of other beliefs, transmitted them, along with numerous other writings of his, in his native language and script, which his disciples . . . have translated into the language of the Greeks from that of the *Syroi*."[20] It should be stressed, since the hy-

17. See H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35.

18. For the very modest and ambivalent traces of a Phoenician historical literature, see F. Millar, "Phoenician Cities" (n. 1), 63–65.

19. F. Millar, *Roman Near East* (n. 1), chap. 12. See J. Teixidor, *Bardésane. La première philosophie syriaque* (1992).

20. Eusebius, *HE* 4, 30.

pothesis being examined is that Porphyry was "at home" in the culture or cultures of "the Orient," that his only known allusion to Bardesanes is much less precise than this (texts to nn. 27–28 below).

Where there were indeed literary or philosophical works written in a Semitic language, it might often be possible to gain acquaintance with them through the medium of Greek translations. This was of course the case with all the books of the Old Testament, including late works such as Daniel, or the Wisdom of Ben Sira, which for some reason never formed part of the Hebrew Bible, but which had been translated in the later second century B.C. to become the book Ecclesiasticus, and to form part of the Catholic but not the Protestant Bible.

Here again, we cannot possibly doubt that Porphyry knew the Bible, for it was, as is well known, precisely he who proved that Daniel was indeed a pseudo-prophecy, and had reached its definite form under Antiochus Epiphanes in the 160s B.C.[21] But nothing in what is preserved, or reflected in later sources, of Porphyry's brilliant discussion shows either that he knew or used Hebrew, or that he derived anything from "Syrian" exegetes, whether Christian or "Jewish." Presumably the notion of a "Syrian" *Jewish* exegete is intended to refer to the authors of commentary-type ("midrashic") works written in Aramaic. Commentaries on biblical works are indeed found in Qumran, necessarily dating from several centuries earlier than Porphyry.[22] There is no reason to presume that none were in circulation in his time. But the earliest examples, which are otherwise known, and which are preserved along with the wider corpus of Talmudic works, are later.[23] There is in any case nothing explicit in Porphyry's writings to show active exchanges with learned Jews of the sort attested by his older contemporary, Origen.[24] It is very relevant that Origen, an Alexandrian by birth, wrote most of his works in Caesarea in Palestine, in an area of Jewish settlement and an active Jewish religious culture, while Porphyry, as we have seen, is not known to have returned to Syria after the age of about thirty. Eusebius claims explicitly that Porphyry wrote *Against the Christians* in Sicily, that he had known Origen in youth, and that he criticised his interpretation of the Bible.[25]

21. See the masterly discussion of all the relevant sections of Porphyry's works by M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* II (1980), 423ff.

22. For this material, see Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III (1986), 308ff. and 420ff. See G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*[4] (1995).

23. See H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (1991).

24. See N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third Century Palestine* (1976).

25. Eusebius, *HE* 6, 19.

It is beyond question that Porphyry had a detailed knowledge of both the Old and the New Testament. But two problems persist, one specific and one much more general. The specific one is: did Porphyry read the Old Testament in the original? So far as I can see, there is nothing in the later Christian tractates (themselves in Greek or Latin) on his hostile critique of the Bible to show that he did.

Once again, however, the negative cannot be proved. The more general question, then, is: should we then, none the less, envisage his intellectual relationship with Jewish sacred texts specifically as a reflection of a wider engagement with a Near Eastern, Semitic-language culture? In short, is this engagement with the Old Testament to be seen as in some sense an expression of Porphyry's own culture and identity, of who Porphyry "was"?

We would in principle be entitled to assert this even if Porphyry himself had not done so, if (for instance) we could set his work against a body of contemporary "Near Eastern" literature (in one or more Semitic languages), and if the comparison clearly showed patterns of thought which were not characteristic of contemporary Greek writing as a whole.

Such a project would go far beyond the scope of this paper. But two warning notes have to be sounded. Firstly, the history of the Near East in the Roman period in no way supports the notion that the common use of a group of Semitic languages (Aramaic in its various dialects, Hebrew, and—perhaps still—Phoenician) instilled any sense of a common ethnic or cultural identity in its various peoples. Secondly, in the specific case of Porphyry, his own words tend in quite the opposite direction. Far from locating their author as "belonging" to the culture of this region, they explicitly distance him from its manifestations.

We might start by contrasting what Porphyry says of Bardesanes with the detailed account of the latter's Syriac writings and their Greek translations which Eusebius offers (text to n. 20 above). Porphyry does refer to Bardesanes once, in his *On Abstinence from Living Things*: "But the Brachmans inherit a *theosophia* of this type by descent, like a priesthood, while the Samanaioi are chosen, and their ranks are filled up from those who volunteer to *theosophein* [contemplate divinity]. This is the state of affairs in their case, as Bardesanes wrote, that is a Babylonian who lived in our fathers' time, and encountered the Indian ambassadors who were sent with Dandamis to Caesar."[26] The *Book of the Laws of Countries* does indeed speak of the "laws [or better "customs"] of the Brahmins who (are) in India (NMWS' DBRKMN' DBHNDY')," though it does not make the precise point which Porphyry cites, nor allude to the

26. *De abst.* 4, 17, 1–2.

embassy. That is of course not a significant problem, since Bardesanes could easily have referred to Brahmins elsewhere. What is significant is not merely that Porphyry happens not to explore Bardesanes' Syriac works and their Greek versions in the way that Eusebius does, but that he chooses to refer to Bardesanes as a "Babylonian." Far from implying that he himself and Bardesanes shared a common culture, he identifies him with an ethnic and cultural group living beyond the bounds of the Empire.

More significant still, however, is Porphyry's deployment of an allusion to "the language of the *Syroi*" in the course of his very important discussion of animals in book III of his *On Abstinence*.[27] If (he argues) animals do have consciousness and reason, if they are *empsycha* (possessed of a soul or spirit), we ought not to sacrifice or eat them. How can we be sure that they do not in fact show signs of consciousness, for instance, in communicating with each other by sound, and in receiving auditory communications from humans? Is it an objection that we cannot understand the sounds which they make? No, because, firstly, some people do turn out to have this capacity. Secondly, we cannot understand or interpret the languages of foreigners, but this does lead us to the conclusion that the sounds which they make are not language. It is here that Porphyry chooses a very significant example:

> As regards that which is uttered by the tongue, in whatever manner it is uttered, in barbarian manner or Greek, or in the style of dogs or of cattle, those living things which emit sounds participate in discourse, humans uttering in accordance with human norms, animals in accordance with those which each species has received from the gods and from nature. If we do not understand them, so what? Greeks do not understand the language of Indians, and nor do those brought up in the Attic tongue understand that of Scythians or Thracians or Syrians. But the sound made by the one group falls on the ears of the other like the shrieking of cranes. And yet for each group their language can be expressed in letters and can be articulated, as ours can be for us. But, for example, the language of the Syrians or the Persians is incapable of being articulated or expressed in letters [by us?], just as is for all men the language of animals.[28]

27. See esp. R. Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate* (1993).

28. *De abst.* 3, 3, 3–4. My translation adopts the valuable suggestions by Leofranc Holford-Strevens.

This complex passage could be interpreted in various ways, and need perhaps be claiming no more than that, as a matter of fact, for the majority of Greeks, the languages of Thracians, Scythians, Syrians, and Persians are all unintelligible, and cannot, when heard, be interpreted in written form. But what is absolutely undeniable about the passage is that Porphyry implicitly fails to claim any personal capacity in terms of the potential mutual translatability of the two major languages of the wider region to which he belonged, Greek and Aramaic.

All conclusions about Porphyry's culture and identity must be very tentative. We cannot prove that there was not a still living Phoenician literature and tradition, nor that a Tyrian of good family in the third century would not have spoken and written Phoenician, as he certainly did Greek; nor that Syriac (in Mesopotamia) and Jewish Aramaic (in Syria Palaestina) were the only branches of Aramaic in which literary or religious works were currently being composed; nor that, on the basis of a personal knowledge of Phoenician, Porphyry did not also read the Hebrew Bible. But all such suppositions remain pure hypotheses, and the passage from *On Abstinence* 3 just quoted strongly suggests that such hypotheses are fragile. The Porphyry whom we can encounter is solely the Porphyry embodied for us in a series of works written in Italy and Sicily, in Greek. We should not base our interpretation of them on a real-life "Phoenician," "Syrian," or "oriental" Porphyry whom we ourselves have constructed.

An Oriental Culture?

So far, we have looked at the possible "identity" of Porphyry in terms of his Tyrian origins, and the possible relevance of these origins to his relationship to the Semitic-language cultures of the areas in the Near East which in Porphyry's time were Roman provinces. As we have seen, there are profound problems as regards Porphyry's (possible) knowledge of written or spoken Phoenician, and even more profound ones as regards his supposed knowledge either of any of the dialects of Aramaic which we know were written languages in his time (Palmyrene, Syriac, Jewish Aramaic, and—marginally, since the vast majority of the relevant inscriptions, and all the known papyri, are earlier—Nabataean), or of Hebrew.

No negative conclusions can be reached, and all these possibilities remain open. But it is significant, firstly, that when Porphyry has occasion to refer to Bardesanes he identifies him as a "Babylonian." It is even more significant that, just when he might have stressed the possibility of understanding across

the barriers created by the existence of different human languages groups, he seems to do the opposite: "the language of the Syrians" is represented as being just as unintelligible for Greeks as that of Scythians, Thracians, or Persians. He does not seem, here or anywhere else, to claim any linguistic or cultural affinity uniting the users of Semitic languages in the Near East.

To treat the question of Porphyry's cultural identity strictly in terms of language may well, however, be too narrow. He might, as a Tyrian, none the less have claimed a particular affinity with, or understanding of, other elements of Near Eastern culture. He might also, in some significant way, have made comparable claims for his relationship to other "oriental" cultures, whether of regions within the Empire, like Egypt, or outside it, like Babylonia, Persia, or India. To look at this question, with all its complications, as fully as it ought to be considered, would be to re-write the whole history of Greek culture and its relation to "alien wisdom," and that obviously cannot be attempted here. Instead, it is only possible to look briefly at the manner of Porphyry's self-representation in this respect, and to suggest how frail a basis the relevant passages provide for any serious notion of Porphyry as a man rooted in "oriental" culture (or cultures).

Fundamental distinctions have to be drawn here too. We may be concerned with representations by Porphyry of how figures from the past, like Pythagoras, had drawn on various sources of "oriental" wisdom; or with reports of the actual reading of texts in non-Greek (and non-Semitic) languages; or with conceptions of "oriental" cultures and forms of learning which were current within contemporary Greek culture. It is very relevant to these questions that Porphyry himself records that works which were allegedly by Zoroaster or "Zostrianus" were circulating in his time, and—in the opinion of Plotinus and his pupils—were wholly spurious. Speaking of these pupils of Plotinus, he says: "Amelius went to forty volumes in writing against the book of Zostrianus. I, Porphyry, wrote a considerable number of refutations of the book of Zoroaster, which I showed to be entirely spurious and modern, made up by the sectarians to convey the impression that the doctrines which they had chosen to hold in honour were those of the ancient Zoroaster."[29] This critical view is significant, even though Porphyry had earlier recorded that Plotinus himself had joined Gordian III's eastern expedition of 242 in the hope of making contact with Persian and even Indian learning.[30] It does not seem in fact that any of Porphyry's explicit references to the doctrines or practices of non-Greek peoples ever claim any

29. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 16, Loeb trans.

30. *V. Plot.* 3.

direct knowledge of texts in the relevant languages. For instance, Augustine records that in his *On the Return of the Soul* Porphyry had spoken of the customs and doctrine (*mores et disciplina*) of the Indians and of the initiation (*inductio*) of the Chaldaeans.[31] In his *On the Derivation of Philosophy from Oracles*, as quoted by Eusebius in the *Praeparatio Evangelica*, he went in for even more sweeping representations of non-Greek doctrines: "For the road to the gods is bound with brass, and both steep and rough; the barbarians discovered many paths thereof, but the Greeks went astray and those who already held it even perverted it. The discovery was ascribed by the god to Egyptians, Phoenicians, Chaldeans (for these are the Assyrians), Lydians and Hebrews."[32] Such a statement of course embodies a view of the limits of Greek philosophy. But it is not a claim to have read original texts in any of the non-Greek languages listed. Moreover, we know that, at least on occasion, when Porphyry attributes doctrines to "the Chaldaeans,"[33] he is speaking of a well-known collection of texts in Greek hexameter verse, the *Chaldaean Oracles*, apparently written in the second century A.D.[34] It cannot be clear whether he also depends on this text, itself preserved only in fragments, when in the preface to the *Letter to Anebo* he speaks of the teaching of the Chaldaean wise men (*sophoi*) and the prophets (*prophetai*) among the Egyptians. As elsewhere, his sweeping and inclusive view of "oriental" sources of doctrine is significant for contemporary culture; but such references cannot possibly serve as evidence for actual reading of texts in the languages concerned.[35]

A fortiori, while it is again significant that his *Life of Pythagoras* represents its subject as learning from Egyptians, Chaldaeans, Phoenicians, Arabs, and "Zaratos" (Zoroaster),[36] this has no implications for actual cultural transference in the third century A.D. In all these cases we are clearly dealing with the representation, or manipulation, within Greek culture of the image of non-Greek cultures. It does not follow, of course, that we are never witnessing the real acquisition of doctrines of patterns of thought. But where we have the best evidence for that, in the fourth book of Porphyry's *On Abstinence*, what we actually see is Porphyry's use either of specific works which had already

31. Augustine, *Civ. Dei* 10, 32; see also 10, 9.

32. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 4, 10, 1–5, trans. Gifford (= Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 450).

33. See Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 452.

34. E. des Places, ed., *Oracles Chaldaïques* (1971); R. Majercik, *The Chaldaean Oracles: Text, Translation and Commentary* (1989). See D. Potter, *Prophets and Emperors: Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (1994), esp. 203ff.

35. *Letter to Anebo*, ed. A. R. Sodano (1958), *praef.*

36. *Vita Pythagorae*, ed. E. des Places (1982), 6, 11–12.

been translated into Greek, or of elements of non-Greek wisdom which had already been the object of literary representation within Greek culture.

Here Porphyry does indeed turn in succession to the lessons to be drawn, in relation to the eating or sacrifice of animals, from a number of non-Greek cultures (4, 5: "turning to the other races [*ethnē*]"). But in each case, as becomes quite clear, he is using representations of the relevant belief systems which were already current in Greek. What he records of Egyptian customs comes, as he states explicitly, from the Stoic writer of the first century A.D., Chaeremon.[37] For Jewish customs and beliefs, including reports of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, he turns to Josephus, referring to the seven books of the *Jewish War* and the twenty of the *Antiquities*.[38] He then comes to the customs of the *Syroi*, to whom he attributes an original abstention from living things, and hence from sacrifice, tempered later by the adoption of sacrifice to avert evils, but still accompanied by avoidance of eating meat. It might naturally be supposed that, here above all, he would draw on authentic indigenous information, or at the very least represent himself as so doing. But in fact his sources are given as "Neanthes the Cyzicene" and "Asclepiades the Cyprian," from whom he quotes a story about Pygmalion, a Phoenician king of Cyprus.[39] This section then ends with a quotation from Menander.

From there Porphyry continues to Persian customs, deriving his information from "Euboulos who wrote an account of Mithras in many books"; this report seems to be the only evidence for the writer concerned, who may belong to the Antonine period.[40] Finally, Porphyry moves to the Indians, and to the two sects (*haireseis*) of the naked philosophers (*gymnosophistai*) among them, the Brachmanes and the Samanaioi, referring, as we saw above (text to n. 26), to "Bardesanes a Babylonian."[41] As we saw also, he does not betray any explicit awareness of the fact that Bardesanes' works had been written in Syriac.

Three features therefore stand out in Porphyry's use of foreign cultures, and especially "oriental" ones. Firstly, as it seems, his sources were works which had either been composed in Greek or had already been translated from some other language; secondly, he deploys a wide variety of non-Greek

37. *De abst.* 4, 6. The exposition covers chaps. 6–10.

38. *De abst.* 4, 11–14.

39. *De abst.* 4, 15. For the problems in identifying Neanthes, see R. Laqueur, s.v. "Neanthes," *RE* XVI, cols. 2108–10, and Jacoby, *FGrH*, no. 84, F. 32 (early third century B.C.), distinguishing him from a later Neanthes, *FGrH*, no. 171. Asclepiades (*FGrH*, no. 752) is quoted only here.

40. *De abst.* 4, 16. *RE* VI, cols. 878–79, s.v. "Eubulos" (15).

41. *De abst.* 4, 17–18.

belief systems (or Greek representations of them); and, thirdly, he does not seem to give any special place to "Phoenicians" or "Syrians," or to assert any positive relationship to them. This point is illustrated, for instance, in a passage from the second book of *On Abstinence*: "For it would be a terrible thing, that while the Syrians do not taste fish and the Hebrews pigs, and many of the Phoenicians and the Egyptians cows . . ."[42] It must, I think, be admitted that it cannot be proved that Porphyry himself read texts in any non-Greek language, even Phoenician or Hebrew or the varieties of Aramaic, or that he explicitly identifies himself, as represented in his works, as "belonging" to a "Phoenician," to a "Syrian," or to a wider "oriental" culture. Even so, it would be legitimate to suppose that there is something more than (approximate) coincidence of time and place in the fact that Porphyry's recurrent deployment of representations of alien wisdom is clearly paralleled by the presence of the same feature in the work of Numenius and Iamblichus. Numenius came from Apamea in the Orontes valley (an area which, as it happens, has produced no Semitic-language documentary material from the imperial period) and seems to have been writing in the second half of the second century. His Neoplatonic works survive only in fragments, so assertions about either ethnic or cultural self-ascriptions on his part cannot be made with certainty. All the same, it is at least hazardous to assert that his undoubted knowledge of the Old Testament should be interpreted as knowledge of "Semitic literature."[43] The half-stated implication that he might himself have been a speaker of a Semitic language, or have been acquainted with other Semitic literatures, is without positive confirmation. Numenius does, however, like Porphyry, evoke a variety of forms of alien, or "oriental," learning, asserting that one must go beyond Plato's works and "appeal to peoples of good reputation, comparing their rites of initiation and their doctrines and propositions insofar as they are accepted as chiming with those of Plato, those that is such as the Brachmanes and Jews and Magoi and Egyptians have laid down."[44] The passage would surely not lead anyone to assert that Numenius actually knew the (at least) four wholly separate languages involved, or had read texts in each of them. But it could, of course, be seen as a typically "oriental" view, putting Greek culture in a wider perspective.

Much the same could be claimed of the much better known works of Iamblichus, a younger contemporary of Porphyry, born (it would seem) soon after the middle of the third century, and coming from the small city of Chal-

42. *De abst.* 2, 61, trans. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 454.

43. So des Places (n. 34), 21.

44. Numenius, "On the Good," fr. 1a, des Places (n. 34).

cis on the edge of the Syrian steppe, between Apamea and Beroea; this too was part of that central Syrian zone which (so far at least) has produced no Semitic-language documents dating earlier than the late Empire (when the use of Syriac in Christian contexts spread westwards from the Euphrates). But in his case too the temptation to see him as having been, in cast of mind, "half-oriental" has proved too strong to resist. Hence, it is suggested, the *Chaldaean Oracles* (text to n. 34 above) will have had a natural attraction for him: "half-oriental, half-Hellenic—this kind of writing must have attracted Iamblichus."[45]

The work which is referred to here, Iamblichus' *On the Egyptian Mysteries*, duly deploys allusion to a wide range of non-Greek sources of wisdom: the Chaldaean or wise men (*sophoi)* (who recur several times) or Egyptian prophets, or to whole sacred races (*ethnē*), such as Assyrians and Egyptians, whose languages the gods have marked out as fit for the expression of the sacred.[46] What group Iamblichus will have intended to refer to as "Assyrian" is not immediately clear (text to n. 12 above). It does not become much clearer when we examine a (potentially) important passage early in the first book: "We then, as regards the ancestral doctrines of the *Assyrioi*, will faithfully convey to you our opinion, and, as for our own, will clearly declare them to you."[47] The passage clearly supports the idea, presented by a scholion, and borrowed from Proclus, that the author of this work was Iamblichus, but writing in the person of an Egyptian, Abammon.[48] For just before this the text has referred, as noted above, to "the *sophoi* of the Chaldaeans and the prophets of Egypt." "Assyrioi" here will therefore mean "Chaldaeans." Once again, we are in the context of the deployment of various types, or representations, of alien wisdom. It will be no surprise, and does not need emphasis, that the same motif appears also in Iamblichus' *Life* of Pythagoras, as it had in Porphyry's. But, if we are looking either for concrete evidence of knowledge and use of non-Greek languages or literatures, or for explicit self-ascription as a "Syrian," or any other ethnic or cultural designation, we will not find it here.

45. So E. des Places, *Jamblique: les mystères d'Égypte* (1960), 15.

46. Iamblichus, 1, 1; 1, 2; 7, 7; 9, 4. See esp. 7, 4.

47. Iamblichus, 1, 2.

48. See H.-D. Saffrey, "Les livres IV à VII de *De Mysteriis* de Jamblique relus avec la lettre de Porphyre à Anébon," in H. J. Blumenthal and E. G. Clark, eds., *The Divine Iamblichus, Philosopher and Man of Gods* (1993), 144.

Conclusion

By its nature, a discussion such as this has to operate at a number of different logical levels, and cannot lead to definite conclusions. Above all, it cannot lead to definite *negative* conclusions. At the end, almost all possibilities still remain open.

However, if we do distinguish carefully between the different logical levels involved, we can at least map out the nature of the problem more clearly, and also bring out explicitly the unstated implications of the bold presuppositions which have been deployed in interpreting the works of the Neoplatonic philosophers from the Roman province of Syria. Is it either meaningful or helpful to describe Porphyry as "Phoenician," "Syrian," or "oriental"? Some empirical tests can be applied, even though wider questions remain open.

All his works are in Greek. Documentary evidence shows that Hebrew, Aramaic, Nabataean (marginally), Palmyrene, and Syriac were all written languages in the third century A.D. There is no comparable evidence for Phoenician. There is no positive evidence that Porphyry spoke or wrote Phoenician, or that he could read Biblical Hebrew, or that he was aware of contemporary Jewish writing in Hebrew (the *Mishnah*) or in Jewish Aramaic. Unlike Eusebius, he shows no explicit awareness that Bardesanes' works had originally been written in Syriac, gives Bardesanes the distancing appellation of "a Babylonian," and appears to go out of his way to deny the intelligibility, to Greeks, of "the language of the *Syroi*." Still less is there any concrete evidence that he could or did study texts in Egyptian or Akkadian, or in Iranian or Indian languages.[49] All the *explicit* indications which we have for the sources of his awareness of non-Greek cultures, or of representations of them, show that these sources were in Greek.

The hypothesis which this paper tentatively advances is that we should begin our attempts to understand Porphyry, like Numenius from Apamea and Iamblichus from Chalcis, not by applying ethnic labels to them (or to their culture or cast of mind), but by recognising that all three came from precisely that area of the Near East—the only one indeed—where in the third century we have no documentary evidence for the use of any language except Greek (and indeed Latin, a strangely forgotten factor, in that Tyre was now a colony). Porphyry, furthermore, left this area as a young adult and

49. For possible learning of Akkadian by someone from Roman Syria, see the evidence from the *Babyloniaka* of the other Iamblichus, the novelist of the second century A.D., discussed at length in F. Millar, *Roman Near East* (n. 1), 489ff.

seems to have written all his works in Sicily or Italy. The hypothesis which the mundane factual evidence suggests is simply that his cultural and intellectual identity was Greek and that his intellectual career was conducted "at Rome" (and in Sicily).

This is of course only a hypothesis, or starting point. Nothing said here could serve to prove that distinctively "oriental" patterns of thought did not inform the works of all the philosophers writing in Greek who originated in Roman Syria. Even less do these suggestions explain the significance of the recourse to perceived elements, or characteristics, of non-Greek cultures which so marks their writings. Still less again can these brief remarks serve to confront the major question of whether, not only in the archaic period (where there is no doubt), but through the Hellenistic and Roman periods, there had been a genuine engagement within Greek culture with (for instance) Egyptian, Babylonian, or Iranian thought, religion, and culture. (That there was such an ongoing engagement with Jewish—and then Christian—religious tradition and culture is, of course, self-evident.) These much wider questions remain open. It may, however, prove useful, even in relation to the major issues, if we learn to approach individual writers without applying to them unexamined presuppositions as to their ethnic and cultural identity.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Hagar, Ishmael, Josephus, and the Origins of Islam[*]

In memory of Menahem Stern

To me, it is impossible to look back on the life and work of Menahem Stern without seeing him along with two other great scholars: Elias Bickerman and Arnaldo Momigliano. In one way this is a false, or at least a foreshortened, perspective. For these latter two, born in 1903 and 1908 respectively, were both children of the relatively secure period before the First World War. By the time that Stern was born, only a couple of decades later, in 1925, the world had already been transformed. But all three were able to inherit the finest traditions of the European classical scholarship of the nineteenth century; all three, in different ways, combined that formal classical education with the Jewish learning which was native to them; all three were forced by the pressure of circumstances into emigration; and all three came by the end of their lives to produce much of their work in English. In retrospect, I wonder if the wholesale transplantation of European scholarship and science into English-speaking environments in the middle of the twentieth century will not seem a revolution comparable to the Renaissance itself.

That a man born in Bialystok should have written his major work, on the treatment of Jews and Judaism in Greek and Latin authors, in English, was thus a reflection of an immense, world-wide transformation. That he should have done so as a professor in a university founded in Jerusalem in the year of his birth, and that he should have taught, and also written, in Hebrew, was a reflection of another change, whose importance can now hardly be exaggerated: the power of national, or ethnic, historical and cultural traditions, whether truly preserved in written texts and communal observances,

[*] First published in *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993): 23–45.

or re-discovered and re-activated—or simply invented. The question of ethnicity, of to what group people believe themselves to belong, has emerged as the fundamental issue of the late twentieth century. The issue is determined above all by two things: a common language, whether spoken or confined to written texts, and a common history—or at least a history which is perceived as real, and felt as a common possession.

In that sense, we ought to acknowledge that the late twentieth-century world of competing ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups is, for good or ill, a Jewish invention, and one whose roots lie far back in the ancient world. For what distinguished the Jews from all the other groups which came within the orbit of Graeco-Roman civilisation was precisely the fact that they already possessed a national religious history, the Bible (even if not yet quite complete in its canonical form), written in a literary language entirely independent of Greek or Latin. Existing as a corpus of literary works, the Bible could be and was translated into Greek in the Hellenistic period.

The significance of this inherited national and religious history was to be brought out most emphatically by Josephus, whose works were in turn to be central to the historical outlook of Christianity—and, in a very different way, to the scholarly concerns of Bickerman, Momigliano, and Stern. For in contrasting the attitudes to "their" literatures of Jews and Greeks, Josephus heavily underscores precisely the difference between an inherited literary culture and an inherited national and religious culture:

> Our books, those which are justly accredited, are but two and twenty, and contain the record of all time.
>
> Of these, five are the books of Moses, comprising the laws and the traditional history from the birth of man down to the death of the lawgiver. This period falls only a little short of three thousand years. From the death of Moses until Artaxerxes, who succeeded Xerxes as king of Persia, the prophets subsequent to Moses wrote the history of the events of their own time in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and precepts for the conduct of human life.
>
> From Artaxerxes to our time the complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets.
>
> We have given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and, if need be, cheerfully to die

> for them. Time and again ere now the sight has been witnessed of prisoners enduring tortures and death in every form in the theatres, rather than utter a single word against the laws and the allied documents.
>
> What Greek would endure as much for the same cause? Even to save the entire collection of his nation's writings from destruction he would not face the smallest personal injury. For to the Greeks they are mere stories improvised according to the fancy of their authors.[1]

What Josephus says about the available records of the history of the Jews is also, viewed from a different angle, a statement about the material which he had been able to use for the twenty books of his *Jewish Antiquities*, written in Greek in Rome; beginning with the Creation, this great work carried its narrative continuously to the outbreak of the great revolt in A.D. 66. Josephus did his best—both in the passage cited and elsewhere—to distance himself from the conventions and criteria of Greek literature.[2] But he was none the less, inevitably, reshaping his material to make it acceptable and intelligible to a Greek readership. This paper is devoted to the way in which one characteristic Greek way of relating the past to the present was taken over by Josephus, and applied to the retelling and exposition of the biblical narrative. If the consequences of his doing so were indeed as will be suggested below, the particular step which he took was to be of very great importance for future religious history.

The mode of thought, or means of categorising information, which Josephus took over from Greek historical writing was that which was expounded by Elias Bickerman in a now famous article of 1952, "Origines Gentium."[3] That is to say that one very significant way in which Greeks tended to characterise the various other Greek, semi-Greek, and non-Greek peoples whom they encountered was to identify them in terms of legendary or divine founders who themselves had a place within Greek mythology or mythical history. More important still, these identifications were often taken over and adopted by semi-Greek and non-Greek peoples, with real consequences for both their self-identification and their activities and attachments in the contemporary world. The legend of the descent of the Macedonian kings from Heracles via emigrants from Argos is merely one example, and one which was to have important consequences for the ambitions of Philip and Alexander

1. Josephus, *C. Apion*. 1, 42–45, Loeb trans.

2. See also *BJ* 1, *pr*. 1–16; *Ant*. 20, 259–68.

3. E. Bickerman, "Origines Gentium," *Class. Philol*. 47 (1952): 401 = *Religions and Politics in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (1985), 399.

and for the creation of the Hellenistic world. Another, obviously enough, was the legendary descent of the Romans from a fugitive from the sack of Troy, Aeneas.

Among the peoples for whom Graeco-Roman writers sometimes tried to find a place in their own pre-history, or mythological history, were the Jews. Several different versions of such attempts are found for instance in Tacitus' *Histories*; as is quite clear from this confused and ill-informed account, discussed with typical charity and dispassion by Menahem Stern, if Josephus found any pagan readers for his *Antiquities* among his younger contemporaries, Tacitus was not among them. Tacitus had indeed, like earlier pagan writers, learned something of Moses and the Exodus. But for his account of the origins of the Jews he produces a typical mixture of versions, strongly influenced by verbal similarities between names, or by the invention of founders whose names are produced by extrapolation backward from current ethnic or local names:

> It is said that the Jews were originally exiles from the island of Crete who settled in the farthest parts of Libya at the time when Saturn had been deposed and expelled by Jove. An argument in favour of this is derived from the name: there is a famous mountain in Crete called Ida, and hence the inhabitants were called Idaei, which was later lengthened into the barbarous form Iudaei. Some hold that in the reign of Isis the superfluous population of Egypt, under the leadership of Hierosolymus and Iuda, discharged itself on the neighbouring lands; many others think that they were an Ethiopian stock, which in the reign of Cepheus was forced to migrate by fear and hatred. Still others report that they were Assyrian refugees, a landless people, who first got control of a part of Egypt, then later they had their own cities and lived in the Hebrew territory and the nearer parts of Syria. Still others say that the Jews are of illustrious origin, being the Solymi, a people celebrated in Homer's poems, who founded a city and gave it the name Hierosolyma, formed from their own.[4]

Such a means of categorisation and identification might well also have been applied by Greek and Latin writers to the Arabs, or, as they came more generally to call them in the course of the imperial period, "Saracens." Our conceptions of what such a categorisation of the "Saracens" might have been like would no doubt be clearer if we still possessed the excursus on them which

4. Tacitus, *Hist.* 5, 2, 1–2, Loeb trans. = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 281.

Ammianus Marcellinus attached to an early (and now lost) book of his *History*, dealing with the reign of Marcus Aurelius.[5] But the *Arabes* or *Arabioi* of antiquity have so far not had a Menahem Stern to collect and analyse all the classical references to them, which begin in the fifth century with Aeschylus and Herodotus.[6] Much is indeed reported—above all as preserved in Diodorus, Strabo, and Pliny the Elder—about the extensive area, from the Tigris to the Yemen, as well as the Eastern Desert of Egypt, which could be described as "Arabia," and about its products and the customs and beliefs of the peoples who lived there.[7] Pliny in particular notes the names of a large number of Arab *gentes* (tribes) and *oppida* (settlements), as does Ptolemy in his *Geography*.[8] But, so far as I can determine, no Greek or Roman writer made any serious attempt to provide an ancestry, from within pagan mythology, either for the Arabs as a whole or for individual peoples who were regarded as "Arab." As regards the various "Arab" peoples, it would in any case be a mistake on our part to expect too much consistency on the part of classical writers in identifying stable "tribal" groupings or in attaching definite names to them; for we have to allow for fluctuations over time, for movements in space, for ignorance or confusion among Graeco-Roman observers, for the notorious difficulties of transliteration as between Semitic and Indo-European languages, and for inaccurate manuscript transmission. None the less, it is worth recording that the "*Arabes* who are called *Thamoudēnoi*" recorded by Diodorus (3, 44, 6) as inhabiting the eastern coast of the Red Sea reappear as *Tamudaei* in Pliny (6, 32), as *Thamoudēnoi* in Ptolemy, and as *Thamouda* in Uranius, apparently writ-

5. Ammianus 14, 4, 2.

6. See the typically concise and exhaustive treatment by Th. Nöldeke, s.v. "Arabia, Arabians," *Enc. Bibl.* I (1899), 272; Aeschylus, *Pers.* 316; Herodotus 2, 11; 3, 107–13. See now J. Retsö, *The Arabs in Antiquity: Their History from the Assyrians to the Umayyads* (2003).

7. See, e.g., Diodorus 2, 48, 1–5; 3, 43–48; 19, 94, 1–95, 2; Strabo, *Geog.* 1, 2, 34 (41–42), from Posidonius (*FGrH* 87, F. 105a; Edelstein-Kidd, F. 280); 2, 5, 32 (130); 16, 1, 11–12 (741); 16, 4, 1–27 (767–85); Pliny, *NH* 6, 142–62.

8. Ptolemy, *Geog.*, ed. Nobbe, 5, 17: "The map of Arabia Petraia," mentioning (para. 3) "the *Sarakēne*" (the earliest attested use of the word) and "the *Pharanitai*" (for the significance of Pharan, in the Sinai Peninsula, in biblical tradition, see text to nn. 18 and 71 below); 5, 19: "The map of Arabia Deserta." Note the peoples listed in 5, 19, 2, including the *Agraioi* (cf. the *Agraei* recorded by Pliny, *NH* 6, 154 and 161, and see further text to nn. 69–71 below); 6, 7: "The map of Arabia Felix." Note esp. 5, 7, 21, the long list of peoples listed as occupying the mountainous northern part of the inland region, including *Skēnitai* (treated here as an ethnic name), *Sarakēnoi* (as with *Sarakēne* above, the earliest use), Thamudēnoi, and in 5, 7, 23, *Thanouītai*.

ing in the fourth century.[9] Much more important, they are recorded in both Greek and Nabataean in an important inscription of the 160s A.D. from Ruwwāfa in the northern Hedjaz: the "tribe" appears as "the nation [*ethnos*] of the *Thamoudēnoi*" in Greek and as SRKT TMWDW in Nabataean.[10] They are thus localised exactly in the region where Ptolemy, at about the same moment, puts them. The inscription, naming Marcus Aurelius and Verus, and two governors of the Roman province of Arabia, shows the *Thamudeni* already within the orbit of the Roman imperial power; that they remained so, and continued to be a definite "tribal" group, is clearly implied by the fact that cavalry units called *Equites Saraceni Thamudeni* are found serving in the late Roman army.[11]

At least for the nearer peoples, therefore, Graeco-Roman literary sources *could* embody a reasonably consistent record of locality and identity. In other words Graeco-Roman culture did exhibit some curiosity about the peoples, designated by a considerable variety of "tribal" names, who inhabited the Syrian steppe and the Arabian peninsula. But, as was only to be expected, Graeco-Roman writers recorded rather more information about the settled population of Arabia Felix (the Yemen), to some extent about the inhabitants of the mountain chain (and trade route) of the Hedjaz, and particularly about the *Nabataioi*, the inhabitants of the kingdom which would in A.D. 106 become the Roman province of "Arabia." Graeco-Roman writers (particularly Diodorus and Strabo) had no hesitation in describing the *Nabataioi* as *Arabes*.[12] The same does not however seem to have applied to the *Itouraioi* who lived on and around Anti-Lebanon; references to them by pagan writers are few, and Strabo for instance speaks of "Itouraioi *and* Arabes" as inhabiting this mountain region. Indeed Cassius Dio, writing in the first half of the third century A.D., seems to be the only pagan writer who is attested, in a single passing reference, as describing the "Itouraioi" as "Arabes."[13]

In other words Graeco-Roman observers applied the term "Arab" to a variety of peoples, both settled and nomadic, in the vast area stretching from northern Mesopotamia to the Arabian peninsula, while also being aware of

9. Diodorus 3, 44, 6; Pliny, *NH* 6, 32; Ptolemy, *Geog.* 5, 21 (see n. 8); Uranius, *FGrH* 675, F. 12.

10. The best treatment remains G. W. Bowersock, "The Greek-Nabataean Bilingual Inscription at Ruwwāfa, Saudi Arabia," in J. Bingen, G. Cambier, and G. Nachtergael, eds., *Le monde grec: hommages à Claire Préaux* (1975), 513.

11. *Not. Dign.*, *Or.* 25, 4, ed. Seeck.

12. See n. 7 above.

13. Strabo, *Geog.* 16, 2, 18 (255); Dio 49, 12, 2: "The Ituraeans, namely the Arabs." Cf. 49, 32, 5.

a long list of different "tribal" names in use among them. If the surviving evidence is at all representative, they did not devote a lot of attention to "Arab" customs. Nor, more important, did they have any motive to construct a common descent for all Arabs, or to locate their origins within the framework of their own mythology, as they did with so many other neighbouring peoples. It is impossible to say that they could not have done so. Greek genealogical ingenuity could easily have been extended to the Arabs. But, as it seems, it was not until the first century B.C. that this mode of categorisation was brought into play in relation to them. Moreover, when it was, the mythological framework to which the Arabs were attached was not Greek but biblical. What seems to be the earliest representation of the origins of the Arabs by a pagan Greek writer is offered by Apollonius Molon in the first century B.C. As Martin Goodman points out to me, it is extraordinary that a pagan writer should have applied biblical genealogy to the Arabs, and difficult to imagine that he could have done so without borrowing the idea from a Jewish source. But it is extremely important to what follows that Molon's writings were well known to Josephus. But whether Josephus' much more extensive elaboration of this theme, to which he attaches meanings which, so far as we know, were quite foreign to Molon, was directly inspired by him, we do not know. The passage of Molon in which he gave a compressed and confused account of the descent of the Arabs from Abraham was to be reproduced by Eusebius as follows:

> Molon, who composed the invective against the Jews, relates that the man who survived the flood left Armenia with his sons, having been expelled from his native place by the inhabitants of the land. Having traversed the intermediate country, he came to the mountainous part of Syria, which was desolate. After three generations Abraham was born, whose name signifies the friend of the father. This man was wise and eagerly went to the desert. He took two wives, one a local and a relative of his, and the other an Egyptian handmaid. The Egyptian woman bore him twelve sons, who emigrated to Arabia and divided the country between themselves; they were the first to be kings over the inhabitants of that country. Consequently, till our times there are twelve kings among the Arabs who are namesakes of the sons of Abraham.[14]

14. For the passage of Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9, 9, 1–3, citing the passage of Apollonius Molon quoted below, see Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 46. The passages deriving from Josephus, *C. Apionem*, are nos. 47–50.

It is thus striking that the legendary common genealogy with which the Arabs were not supplied from within Graeco-Roman mythology was derived instead from written Jewish tradition. Moreover, it was to be made explicit, in far more detail and with the attachment of fateful religious connotations, precisely by the Jewish writer who, as we have seen, most emphatically asserts his distance from Greek culture, from Greek historiography, and from the typical uses to which Greeks put the past: Josephus.

To do so, he did precisely what a pagan Greek writer would have done: that is to say he found appropriate starting points within the available corpus of mythological history, and developed these with explicit reference to the present. In doing this, he was quite clearly influenced by Graeco-Roman categories of interpretation, of the type mentioned above, and already applied to Jews. For he quotes in the *Antiquities* a passage of Alexander Polyhistor, who like Apollonius Molon wrote in the first century B.C. In it Alexander quotes an extract from an earlier writer called Cleodemus or Malchus, which both uses the name of a grandson of Abraham and Keturah and combines Greek and Jewish mythological history:

> All these sons and grandsons Abraham contrived to send out to found colonies, and they took possession of Troglodytis and that part of Arabia Felix which extends to the Red Sea. It is said moreover that this Eôphrên led an expedition against Libya and occupied it and that his grandsons settled there and called the land after his name Africa. I have a witness to this statement in Alexander Polyhistor, whose words are as follows: "Cleodemus the prophet, also called Malchus, in his history of the Jews relates, in conformity with the narrative of the lawgiver Moses, that Abraham had several sons by Katura. He moreover gives their names, mentioning three—Apheras, Sures, Japhras—adding that Sures gave his name to Assyria, and the two others, Japhras and Apheras, gave their names to the city of Aphra and the country of Africa. In fact, he adds, these latter joined Heracles in his campaign against Libya and Antaeus; and Heracles, marrying the daughter of Aphranes, had by her a son Didorus, who begat Sophon, from whom the barbarians take their name of Sophakes."[15]

As we can already see, Josephus' procedure depended partly on the proper names to be found in the text of the Bible. It is therefore unfortunate that we cannot be sure whether he used the Hebrew original or only the LXX; nor

15. Josephus, *Ant.* I, 239–41, Loeb trans. For a detailed discussion, see C. R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors* I: *Historians* (1983), 245ff.

(in either case) exactly what forms of these names his text, or texts, offered. But what is most significant is, as we will see, that he took the genealogies found in Genesis, and deployed there primarily as the lines of descent of *individuals*, with indications at certain points of whole peoples who descended from them, and identified the peoples concerned with groups existing in the present. In the case of many of these he offers no further interpretation; but in the case of those contemporaries whom he identifies as "Arabes" he goes significantly beyond Molon, in offering the legendary genealogy which he has supplied as an explanation of a religious custom of theirs: circumcision.

As indicated above, what Josephus does is to take certain plausible starting points found in Genesis and develop them explicitly, not to invent traditions *ex nihilo*. To understand what he does it is necessary to follow his exposition of the Genesis narrative step-by-step.

Genesis 10: The Descendants of Noah's Sons

Josephus' method may be illustrated by setting out what he makes of Genesis 10:2–5:

> Sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magōg, and Madai, and Iōvan, and Elisa and Thabel, and Mosoch, and Thiras. And sons of Gomer: Askhanaz, and Riphath, and Torgmah. And sons of Iōvan: Elisah, and Tharsis, Kitoi, Rodoi. By these were the isles of the nations/races divided in their lands; every one according to his tongue, by their tribes, and by their nations/races.

Both the Hebrew and the LXX texts then proceed directly with no further comment, to list the sons of Ham. Josephus' interpretation of this passage, as given in the Loeb translation (made with the full awareness of the problems about the transmission of names), amounts to a very extensive re-writing. It runs as follows:

> Japheth, son of Noah, had seven sons. These, beginning by inhabiting the mountains of Taurus and Amanus, advanced in Asia up to the river Tanais and in Europe as far as Gadeira, occupying the territory upon which they lit, and, as no inhabitant had preceded them, giving their own names to the nations. Thus those whom to-day the Greeks call Galatians were named Gomarites, having been founded by Gomar. Magog founded the Magogians, thus named after him, but who by the Greeks are called Scythians. Two other sons of Japheth, Javan and Mados, gave birth, the latter to the Madaeans—the race called by the Greeks Medes—the former to Ionia and all the Greeks. Theo-

> bel founded the Theobelians, nowadays called Iberians. The Meschenians, founded by Meschos, are to-day called Cappadocians, but a clear trace of their ancient designation survives; for they still have a city of the name of Mazaca, indicating to the expert that such was formerly the name of the whole race. Theires called his subjects Theirians, whom the Greeks converted into Thracians. So numerous are the nations founded by the sons of Japheth.[16]

Genesis 16–17: Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael: The Covenant and the Obligation of Circumcision at Eight Days

At this point, Genesis (17:25) notes only that Ishmael, born (16:15) before the Covenant was given, was aged thirteen when circumcised. Josephus also (*Ant*. 1, 10, 186–93) makes no systematic editorial comment except to promise (192) a discussion of circumcision elsewhere.

Genesis 21:1–5: Birth of Isaac to Sarah, and His Circumcision at Eight Days

It is here that Josephus makes his most significant intervention in, or extrapolation of, the biblical text. Anticipating an exposition of genealogy which he has not yet provided (see below), he expounds the significance of the two moments of circumcision, at eight days and at thirteen years:

> Eight days later they promptly circumcised him; and from that time forward the Jewish practice has been to circumcise so many days after birth. The Arabs defer the ceremony to the thirteenth year, because Ishmael, the founder of their race, born of Abraham's concubine, was circumcised at that age.[17]

Josephus is thus alluding to a proposition, not yet established in his narrative, that Ishmael was the founder (*ktistēs*) of the race (*ethnos*) of the "Arabes" and offers this as his explanation of a custom currently observed by them.

Genesis 25:12–15: The Descendants of Ishmael

Genesis records: "These are the descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian woman, the maidservant of Sarah bore to Abraham." (The Egyptian origin of Hagar had been indicated in 16:1–3.) Twelve

16. Josephus, *Ant*. 1, 122–25, Loeb trans.

17. Josephus, *Ant*. 1, 214, Loeb trans.

names are then given: "Neba'ioth, the first-born of Ish'mael and Kedar and Adbeel, and Mibsam; and Mishma, and Dumah, and Masa; Ḥadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Ked'emah."

In the LXX this list comes out in the form: "Neba'ioth and Kedar and Nabdeel and Mossam and Masma and Idouma and Massē and Ḥadad and Thaimon and Jetur and Naphes and Kedma."

In both texts these names are listed in the first instance simply as those of individuals. But both then go on to say that these were the rulers of peoples: "these are their names according to their settlements and encampments, twelve rulers over their peoples" (25:16).

It should be noted that neither the Hebrew text nor the LXX gives the names of the "peoples," nor (*a fortiori*) makes any reference to their current locations or customs. An extremely obscure reference to location is attached (25:18) only to the name of Ishmael himself, after the report of his death: "from Havilah to Shur, which is to the east of Egypt on the way to 'Assyria.' " Earlier, after Hagar and Ishmael had been driven out, both texts (21:20–21) had described them as living in the desert of Pharan.

It is again Josephus who makes a decisive editorial intervention at this point and not only locates the relevant peoples in the contemporary world but stresses their relationship to Abraham. After repeating the names as found in the LXX, but—as he always does—with Greek endings (Nabaiōthēs, Kēdaros, and so forth), he continues:

> These occupy the whole territory stretching from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, having given it the name "Nabatēnē." These are they who have named the people of the "Arabes" (*to tōn Arabōn ethnos*) and their tribes after themselves, because of their own distinction and the honour of Abraham.[18]

Josephus reinforces this point later when he inserts a story of the dream of Amram, the father of Moses: God appeared to him in his sleep and reminded him, among other things, of how Abraham "had bequeathed to Ishmael and his descendants the land of the *Arabes*."[19]

"Ishmaelites" and Arabs

At a number of points the Hebrew Bible and the LXX make passing allusions to "Ishmaelites." None of these passages contradicts, and all are compat-

18. Josephus, *Ant.* 1, 220–21.

19. Josephus, *Ant.* 2, 213.

ible with, an underlying presupposition that "Ishmaelites" are nomads from the desert. They may be assumed to wear gold rings (cf. Judges 8:24 on the booty taken by Gideon from the *Midianites*, who are called Ishmaelites in this verse), or may be associated with tents or camels.[20] But in no case is any further comment offered, nor any common descent explicitly alluded to, other than that to be deduced from the name itself (which is, however, *not* used, in either the Hebrew or the Greek, in the account in Genesis of the descendants of Ishmael). Nor still less is there any allusion to a resemblance or relationship in customs or observances between Israelites and Ishmaelites. In Psalms 82/83:7, indeed, there is a clear allusion to the hostility of the surrounding peoples: "the tents of Edom, and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Agarim."

It should be noted also, as shown in an important article by I. Eph'al, that while the term "Arab" is used in the Bible as the designation of nomadic individuals or peoples, no explicit identification of "Ishmaelites" and "Arabs" is offered anywhere in the biblical text.[21] Josephus' introduction of this equation is therefore a deliberate editorial decision on his part.

The relative brevity and lack of interest which characterise biblical references to the "Ishmaelites," compared with the editorial expansions by Josephus, are very clear in Josephus' highly novelistic retelling of the story of Joseph. In the biblical narrative his brothers "raised their eyes and saw a party of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, and their camels laden with gum, balm and resin, on their way down to Egypt," and Joseph was sold to them. In the alternative version which is awkwardly combined with this, Joseph was put in the well, but then sold to the Ishmaelites not by his brothers but by some Midianite merchants.

Here again Josephus makes the ethnic identity of the Ishmaelites quite explicit: "But Judas, another of the sons of Jacob, having seen some Arab traders of the race of Ishmaelites conveying spices and Syrian merchandise from Galadēnē for the Egyptian market, after Rubel's departure advised his brethren to draw up Joseph and sell him to these Arabs."[22] The term "Arab" is not used of the Ishmaelite merchants in either the Hebrew text or the LXX. It is again Josephus' own interpretation.

20. Note that Josephus is recounting the story of Gideon, drops the detail about the rings, but retains in *Ant.* 5, 229, the identification of some of the defeated enemy as "Arabs" —"The Midianites [*Madiēnitai*] and the Arabs [*Arabes*] fighting on their side." For an Ishmaelite and camels, cf. 1 Chron. 27:30.

21. See I. Eph'al, "'Ishmael' and 'Arab(s)': A Transformation of Ethnological Terms," *JNES* 35 (1976): 225.

22. Genesis 37:25–28; 39:1; Josephus, *Ant.* 2, 32.

Biblical Topography: "Nabatēnē"

There is another significant aspect to Josephus' consistent tendency to make these allusions more concrete and to relate them to the contemporary world. As in the passage cited above, where he identifies the area where the descendants of Ishmael lived as "Nabatēnē," it is specifically to the Nabataeans that he attaches the terms "Arab" and "Arabia" (and never specifically to either the "Itouraioi" or the "Idoumaioi").[23] Thus he speaks of Jonathan Maccabaeus as invading "Arabia" and making war on the "Nabatēnoi."[24] What is more, he also intervenes in the biblical narrative to make concrete allusions to the Nabataeans. The most striking instance is his account of the death of Aaron, developed from the narrative in Numbers 20:22–29. There the death takes place on Mount Hor situated "on the frontier of Edom." There is nothing to suggest that these expressions would have conveyed any necessary and unambiguous identification of a precise place to readers in the Hellenistic or Roman periods (except that it was south of the river Arnon, Num. 21:13). Josephus therefore had a choice: to leave his version equally vague, or to import a precise identification. He took the latter course:

> After a purification held in such wise in consequence of the mourning for the sister of their chief, he led his forces away through the desert and came to a place in Arabia which the Arabs have deemed their metropolis, formerly called †Arce†, to-day named Petra. There Aaron ascended a lofty mountain range that encloses the spot, Moses having revealed to him that he was about to die.[25]

The Semitic name which Josephus gives to Petra here is certainly corrupt in the text, for he returns to it later in another passage where he equally makes the deliberate choice to import into his narrative a reference to the capital of the Nabataeans, here significantly described as "the whole Arab nation." This is the point (Num. 31:8) at which Moses' forces slaughter the *Madianites*, including all five of their kings, of whom one is called RQM/LXX: *Rokom*. Josephus transliterates the name as *Rekemos*, giving it a Greek ending as usual. He then continues, with no authority from the biblical text: "the city named after him had the highest prestige of all in the land of the *Arabes*, and to this day is called by the whole Arab nation by the name of the king who founded

23. See K. H. Rengstorf, *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus*, supp. I (1968), *Namenwörterbuch*, ed. A. Schalit, s.vv.

24. *Ant*. 13, 180.

25. Josephus, *Ant*. 4, 82–83, Loeb trans.

it 'Rekemē,' being called 'Petra' among the Greeks." *Rekemē* must have been what he wrote in the passage quoted above, as a Nabataean inscription confirms.[26]

Josephus has thus chosen a way of vocalising the name which he found in the Hebrew Bible and the LXX, which allows him to apply the Greek procedure of finding, or inventing, a legendary founder of a city; the simplest procedure was always to assume that the names of the "founder" and city would be closely similar. But he has also, as he does consistently, highlighted the contemporary Nabataeans as against other Arabs. He was of course none the less aware that persons labelled "Arabs" could also be found as far away as the Parthian domains across the Euphrates.[27]

Josephus never explicitly says that he has derived his identification of the descendants of Ishmael as Arabs from the name of Ishmael's firstborn as given in the text of Genesis, NBYT/LXX: *Nabaiōth*. But the ethnic name of the Nabataeans, as it appears in Nabataean documents, is in any case spelled differently, NBṬW.[28] Modern philologists have not in general accepted that there is any relationship or equivalence between these terms.[29] But that does not mean that ancient writers might not have believed that there was; "false" etymologies played an important part in the cultural history of the ancient world. In this case, however, it should be stressed that the equivalence in question is Josephus' own and is not derived from the LXX. For although the term *Nabataioi* was already in use in Jewish circles in the Hellenistic period, as its appearance in *Maccabees* shows,[30] it is used nowhere else in LXX.

26. Josephus, *Ant*. 4, 161. The Semitic name of Petra is attested in Nabataean, as RQMW, in an inscription published by J. Starcky, "Nouvelle épitaphe nabatéenne donnant le nom sémitique de Pétra," *RB* 72 (1965): 95–97. I am grateful to Avraham Negev for reminding me of this text.

27. Josephus, *BJ* 1, 6.

28. There is in fact a puzzle here for there seems to be an implicit difference of opinion among specialists in Nabataean, a dialect of Aramaic, as to whether NBṬW denotes a people or a region. The latter view is taken by J. Cantineau, *Le Nabatéen* II (1932), 119: "de pays ou de lieu." But the former view is taken consistently in modern treatments of the royal titulature as found on inscriptions and coins. See, e.g., Y. Meshorer, *Nabataean Coins* (1975).

29. Note, however, that E. C. Broome, "Nabaiat, Nebaioth and the Nabataeans: The Linguistic Problem," *JSS* 18 (1973): 1, argues that the crucial factor will have been pronunciation rather than spelling, and that a shift from a written form with *tau* (T) to one with *tet* (Ṭ) could have occurred. The argument is necessarily hypothetical.

30. See 1 Macc. 5:25; 9:35.

"Itouraioi" and "Idoumaioi"

By contrast, Josephus does not devote any interpretative effort to the other eleven names of the sons of Ishmael which he could find in Genesis 25:12–15 (see above text to nn. 18–19). Of these eleven names, nine appear, in the Hellenised form which Josephus gives them, only here (*Ant.* 1, 220), and no explicit or implicit associations are attached to them: Kēdaros, Abdeēlos, Massamos, Masmēmos, Masamsas, Chaddalos (or Chodamos), Thaimonos (or Thamnos), Naphiasos, and Kadmasos.[31] Two of the eleven, Idoumas and Ietouros, do of course bear a close resemblance to ethnic names of neighbouring groups current in Josephus' time, *Idoumaioi* and *Itouraioi*. But it is striking that in these cases too Josephus attaches no particular associations either to the relevant personal name or to the ethnic. It is all the more significant moreover, that he makes no such connection even when he records the conquest of the *Itouraioi* by Aristoboulos in 104/3 B.C., and his compulsion on them, if they wished to remain there, "to be circumcised and live according to Jewish customs."[32] There is nothing to suggest that Josephus saw the Itouraioi as descendants of Ishmael, as "Arabs," or as having already practised circumcision (even if at age thirteen); they are in fact mentioned by him only here.

A much larger part is played in Josephus by *Idoumaia* and the *Idoumaioi*—and not least because as (originally) forced converts to Judaism the Idumaeans were to play a major role in the Jewish history of the first centuries B.C. and A.D. But in fact Josephus not only fails to connect them with "Idoumas" the son of Ishmael but explicitly says that their territory had originally been called *Adōmos* ("Edom"), and that it had been the Greeks who had called it *Idoumaia*.[33] In fact, he hardly could have deployed this item of mythical genealogy, for he subscribed instead to the conception, already found in 1 Maccabees, that the Idumaeans were descended from Esau.[34] Whether this claimed genealogy had originally provided any ideological basis for their forced conversion is another question. In their case also, when Josephus refers to this forcible conversion to Judaism, imposed by John Hyrcanus, he makes clear that circumcision was a novelty, which—like other Jewish observances—the Idumaeans accepted under duress, as being preferable to losing their

31. See K. H. Rengstorf (n. 23), s.vv.

32. Josephus, *Ant.* 13, 318–19. One other passage, *Ant.* 15, 185, identifies a person as an *Itouraios*.

33. *Ant.* 2, 1–3.

34. 1 Macc. 5:65 (defined by locality, i.e., Hebron and Marisa); cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 328, typically expanding his reference to the same episode: "To the sons of Esau, the Idumaeans."

land: "and with the passage of time it came about in their case that they 'were' Jews."[35] Yet even Strabo can assert that the *Idoumaioi* were originally *Nabataioi*, who were expelled by them, and later attached themselves to Jewish customs.[36] Josephus could easily have placed a different construction on their conversion.

It should be made clear that what we are speaking of here is neither the (unknowable) realities of biological descent nor the historical "facts" of actual relations between the Jews and their neighbours, but the ethnic and religious categories used by Josephus. In the case of the *Itouraioi* and *Idoumaioi* he does not, and in the case of the *Nabataioi* he does, take the opportunity to connect (at least implicitly) the name of one of the legendary sons of Ishmael to a current ethnic name; to assert categorically that this ethnic group were *Arabes*; therewith to emphasise the descent from Abraham which they shared with the Jews; and to use the story of Abraham, Hagar, Ishmael, Sarah, and Isaac to explain both a custom (circumcision) allegedly common to both groups and a significant variation (circumcision at eight days and at thirteen years).

It cannot of course be claimed that Josephus either intends to, or does, *confine* the description "Arab" to the Nabataeans. As we have seen, the preface to his *Jewish War* reflects his awareness that there were "Arabs" living beyond the Euphrates, in Parthian domains. One such, "Abias king of the Arabs," indeed appears in his narrative of the conversion to Judaism of the ruling house of Adiabene.[37] He can also refer to Arab dynasts operating in Syria in the late Hellenistic period,[38] and makes an allusion to Arabia Felix (*Eudaimon*), the Yemen.[39] On one occasion, but as it seems only one, he also speaks of groups other than the Nabataeans, among those bordering on Judaea, as being "Arab." This is when he records that Alexander Jannaeus conquered "of the Arabs the *Moabitai* and the *Galaaditai*."[40]

Josephus' use of the term was thus not strictly confined to one political group, the inhabitants of the kingdom which had its capital at what he calls "Arabian Petra." But a large proportion of his uses of the term do refer to this territory, its population, and their kings. What is more, when he encounters the term *Nabataioi* in a narrative source, 1 Maccabees, he can expand it

35. *Ant.* 13, 257–58.

36. Strabo, *Geog.* 16, 2, 34 (760) = Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* I, no. 115.

37. Text to n. 27 above; *Ant.* 20, 75–80.

38. *Ant.* 13, 117–18, from 1 Macc. 11:16–17; *Ant.* 13, 384, an Arab dynast called Zizos near Beroea.

39. *Ant.* 1, 239—also settled by descendants of Abraham; see text to nn. 14–15 above. Note also *Ant.* 9, 102.

40. *Ant.* 13, 374.

by writing *Nabataioi Arabes*.[41] In any case, his identification of the descendants of Ishmael is, as we have seen, quite specific in relating them to the geographical area now called *Nabatēnē*.

We can be reasonably confident that this very concrete identification was original to Josephus; as to *why* he should have chosen to emphasise so strongly this conception of a common descent and common source of religious observances as between Jews and (Nabataean) Arabs, I can see no immediate explanation. But even if, as it seems, this very specific conception was his alone, there may of course have been a wider presupposition, within Judaism, that Arabs in general were to be understood as descendants of Ishmael and as sharing with Jews a common genealogy and religious inheritance. In the nature of the case, it would be impossible to prove a negative here, not least because only fragments of an originally very considerable post-biblical Jewish literature, in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, survive.[42] But it can at least be said that explicit expressions of any conception of a significant relationship between Jews and Arabs are extremely rare outside Josephus. It plays no part in Maccabees, in spite of the centrality in both books of the question of Jewish relations with the peoples living around them.[43] It remains paradoxical that among Hellenistic sources the common descent of Jews and Arabs is represented most clearly by a pagan writer, Apollonius Molon (text to n. 14 above).

So far as I can determine, the question of the genealogy and religious affiliation of Arabs does not arise anywhere in the surviving intertestamental Jewish literature, with the sole exception of a passage in *Jubilees*. This work, whose original Hebrew version certainly belongs to the Hellenistic period, retells the story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael, the Covenant, and the circumcision of Isaac. It also records that Ishmael was then circumcised too, though without specifically mentioning his age at that moment. But it continues by proclaiming with great emphasis that the Covenant was to be solely for those circumcised at eight days, and categorically excludes Ishmael and his descendants: "For Ishmael and his sons and his brothers and Esau, the Lord did not cause to approach him."[44] Consistency is however, not one

41. 1 Macc. 9:35—*Ant*. 13, 10.

42. The most detailed survey is that by G. Vermes and M. D. Goodman in Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1–2.

43. See the passing references to "Arabes" in 1 Macc. 5:39; 11:17 (see n. 38); 12:31 ("against the Arabes who are called Zabadaioi"); 2 Macc. 5:8 ("to Aretas, the *tyrannos*] of the Arabs"—the first reference to the Nabataean dynasty); 12:10–11.

44. *Jubilees* 14–15, trans. of 15:30 from R. H. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* II (1913).

of the author's strong points. So in chapter 20 he vastly expands the brief account in Genesis 25:5–6 of how Abraham gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away. In *Jubilees* Abraham preaches to them (and to Isaac and his sons) a sermon on virtuous living and the observance of the Covenant. Only after that does he send them away:

> And he gave to Ishmael and to his sons, and to the sons of Keturah, gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, and he gave everything to Isaac his son. And Ishmael and his sons, and the sons of Keturah and their sons, went together and dwelt from Paran to the entering in of Babylon in all the land which is towards the East facing the desert. And these mingled with each other, and their name was called Arabs, and Ishmaelites.[45]

As this passage now stands, it brings together the descendants of Hagar and those of Keturah, and categorises them both as "Arabs and Ishmaelites." But what we have depends on Latin and Ethiopic translations of a Greek version. The discoveries at Qumran have made it certain that the Greek version goes back to a Hebrew original, probably composed in the second century B.C.; but the quite numerous Hebrew fragments do not happen to include this passage.[46] So precisely how it read in the original cannot be determined.

So far as our evidence goes, therefore, it was Josephus alone who both emphasised the common genealogical origins of circumcision as practised by Jews and Arabs, and specifically identified the descendants of Ishmaelites among the peoples of the contemporary world, classifying them as "Arabs" and taking as the prime group among "Arabs" the Nabataean inhabitants of the kingdom whose capital was Petra.

Was this identification to have any consequences? Or, even if it itself were not taken up, can it be seen as a reflection of any generally accepted identification within Judaism, from which consequences could be drawn? The answer to both questions, as concerns Jewish tradition, seems to be no. There is, of course, nothing to suggest that Josephus' works continued to be read within the Jewish community of Judaea itself; and if there ever were a literature produced by the Jewish diaspora within the Roman Empire of earlier centuries A.D., it has disappeared without trace.[47] Within rabbinic literature

45. *Jubilees* 20, 11–13, trans. Charles.

46. See Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 308–18; see also the introduction, translation, and notes by O. S. Wintermute in J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* II (1985), 35.

47. See F. Millar, "The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and

there are of course allusions to "Arabs" and "Ishmaelites," whether as individuals who might be encountered in the vicinity or as peoples living further away. But it is a long time since these were collected, and rather summarily discussed.[48] There is almost nothing to suggest that "Ishmaelites" were understood to have a genealogical relationship to Jews. The sole exception known to me is offered by I. Eph'al: in the Jerusalem Talmud there is a story of some priests escaping to the Ishmaelites, taken to be located in "Arabia" ('RB), where they are betrayed by some whom they trusted as cousins (BNY DWDY').[49] Nor is there any significant indication that the "Ishmaelites" were conceived of as particularly promising converts to Judaism, to which they had an ancestral claim; or, alternatively, that they were seen as a potential threat, as rival claimants to that same inheritance. The sole reflection of any such attitude seems to be a legend which is told both in Genesis Rabbah and in the Babylonian Talmud. In the former the story relates how "in the days of Alexander of Macedon" the Ishmaelites came to dispute before him the birthright of Israel, accompanied by the Canaanites and the Egyptians. In the latter the rival claimants are firstly the "Africans" BNY AFRYQY', saying that their descent was from Canaan; then the Egyptians; and finally the Ishmaelites and Keturaeans. All are made to refer to the roles of their ancestors in relation to the Holy Land, as portrayed in the Bible. But no special claim, in terms of religious observances, is represented as being made by the last group.[50]

In short, a brief exploration of the concerns of that Judaism which is represented in the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash does not seem to suggest that the claim of "Ishmaelites" to the inheritance of Abraham was felt to be an important issue. To the very small extent that such an issue does appear, it has to be stressed that both of the works just quoted reached the form in which we have them after the question had been given a quite new level of significance by a new factor: the preaching of Christianity among the Arab peoples of the marginal zones of the Roman Near East, that is, the Sinai peninsula and the Syrian desert.

Christianity, A.D. 312–438," in J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak, eds., *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (1992), 97 (= chapter 17 of the present volume).

48. See S. Krauss, "Talmudische Nachrichten über Arabien," *ZDMG* 70 (1916): 321.

49. See Eph'al (n. 21), 233, citing *yTaanit* 4:69b, Zhitomir, ed., vol. II, p. 22a, lines 20–27. I am grateful to Martin Goodman for locating this passage for me.

50. *Midrash Rabbah, Genesis* 61:7; *bSanh*. 91a. Both references are given by P. Crone and M. Cook in *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (1977), 8. For an up-to-date discussion of the possible dates of composition of the two works, see H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (1991), 208ff. (Talmud), 300ff. (Genesis Rabbah).

Even in this context the issue arose much later and more hesitantly than might have been expected. For the questions of the legitimate inheritance of Abraham, of the necessity of circumcision, of the meaning of the story of Hagar and of the validity of the Mosaic law were all raised in the very earliest Christian writings which we possess, the letters of Paul. In what is almost certainly the earliest of all, Galatians, Paul performs a remarkable feat of interpretation in relating his message to the story of the two sons of Abraham:

> Tell me then, you are so eager to be subject to the Law, have you listened to what the Law says? Scripture says that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and one by the freewoman. The son of the slave girl came to be born in the way of human nature; but the son of the freewoman came to be born through a promise. There is an allegory here: these women stand for the two covenants. The one given on Mount Sinai—that is Hagar, whose children are born into slavery; now Sinai is a mountain in Arabia and represents Jerusalem in its present state, for she is in slavery together with her children.[51]

The crucial point in Paul's preaching was however the claim which he had made in passing earlier in Galatians (3:6): that it had been the faith in God which Abraham had displayed, and not the Law, which had been crucial, and it had been this which had been "accounted to him for righteousness." This claim is explored more fully in Romans, almost certainly written a few years later, with the very significant additional precision that Abraham's faith had been displayed while he was still uncircumcised. Hence he was to be the father not only of the circumcised but of all those who believed while uncircumcised; as the "father of many nations [*ethnē*]," he was "the father of us all."[52]

The claim that there could be, and was, a legitimate claim to the inheritance of Abraham which was independent of and logically prior to circumcision, and *a fortiori* to the Mosaic Law, "which came 430 years later,"[53] was (and is) fundamental to Christianity. Moreover, in their subsequent missionary preaching Christians were clearly not compelled to attach any importance to the question of whether the groups concerned had or had not previously practised circumcision. At the same time, as is well established, it was they, and not his fellow Jews, who took up and exploited the presentation

51. Galatians 4:21–25, trans. New Jerusalem Bible.

52. Romans 4.

53. Galatians 3:17.

of history from the Creation to the fall of the Temple which was offered by Josephus.[54]

Given what was said above about the nature of Josephus' retelling of the story of Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael in the *Antiquities*, there were two rather different ways in which it might have been exploited by Christians. The first was to take up Josephus' specific identification of the descendants of Ishmael with the Nabataeans, the population of the kingdom whose capital was Petra. In 106, however, when hardly any Christian literature outside the New Testament had been written, Nabataea was absorbed by Rome, and became the Roman province of "Arabia," covering approximately the same geographical limits: the Negev and Sinai, the northern Hedjaz, and the entire habitable zone east of the Jordan rift from Aqaba to the southern Hauran. Here, in the area of the Decapolis, the province extended further north than had the kingdom, to include the Greek cities of Philadelphia and Gerasa. In the steppe to the east both the Nabataean and then the Roman presence extended at least to the oasis of Duma or Dumatha (Jawf).[55] The early history of Christianity within this quite extensive Roman province cannot however be written. We have indeed no certain evidence of Christian bishops and congregations there until the third century. The earliest of whom we hear in Eusebius is Beryllus, bishop of Bostra, apparently in office for several decades in the first half of the century. It is however worthy of note that Eusebius introduces him by saying "he was bishop of the Arabs at Bostra."[56]

Christian observers might thus, as suggested above, have taken the opportunity to characterise the inhabitants of this province as "Ishmaelites," already practising circumcision, and with a special claim to the inheritance of Abraham. In the *Epistle of Barnabas* indeed, it is claimed that "every Syrian and Arab" is circumcised, as well as all the (Egyptian) priests—but the author immediately states that that does *not* bring them within the Covenant.[57] It does not seem, however, even though observers could describe the Christians of the province of "Arabia" as "Arabs," that their status as such presented either any particular problems or any particular opportunities for Christian

54. On this much-studied question, see H. Schreckenberg, *Die Flavius—Josephus—Tradition in Antike und Mittelalter* (1972); *Rezeptionsgeschichtliche und textkritische Untersuchungen zu Flavius Josephus* (1977); M. E. Hardwick, *Josephus as a Historical Source in Patristic Literature through Eusebius* (1989).

55. See G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (1983).

56. Eusebius, *HE* 6, 20, 2. Cf. 6, 33, and A. von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*[4] II (1924), 699ff.

57. *Barnabas* 9, 6.

interpretation. In reality, as the story of Origen's exchanges with Beryllus of Bostra makes clear, the church in "Arabia" was Greek-speaking like that elsewhere in the eastern Roman Empire.[58]

It is none the less in the mid-third century, and in the writings of Origen, that the question of the historic religious identity of the "Ishmaelites" began to make its appearance in Christian writings. Thus, for example, in the *Contra Celsum* Origen notes that the Jews distinguished their custom of circumcision from that of the "Ishmaelite Arabs," although Ishmael was the son of their father Abraham and had been circumcised with him.[59] Similarly, but selecting a slightly different aspect, Eusebius in the *Praeparatio Evangelica* notes that among the Ishmaelites of "Arabia" all are circumcised at age thirteen, "for this is recorded of them." His dependence on Josephus (direct or indirect) is clear.[60] None the less, even in this period, while the presumptions of a common descent, or the (partially) common custom of circumcision can be alluded to, no positive conclusions are drawn from it. Such a deduction began to appear only when the extension of Christianity beyond the area of direct Roman control came in question. We see a version of it, for instance, in the account by Philostorgius of a Christian mission sent by Constantius II (A.D. 337–61) to "the Sabaeans, now called Homeritai" (the inhabitants of Arabia Felix, or Himyar, that is the Yemen): "this race is descended from those born to Abraham by Keturah" (text to n. 15 above). Philostorgius goes on to say that they carried out circumcision on the eighth day, while also being pagans who worshipped the Sun, Moon, and local deities; "but a not inconsiderable number of Jews is intermingled with them."[61]

Though Philostorgius does not offer any such explicit interpretation, it was thus possible for Christians to see peoples living in the Arabian peninsula as having largely but not wholly lapsed from their ancestral Jewish customs and as having adopted paganism. It was to be precisely this presumption, based on Josephus' equation of "Arabs" with the descendants of Ishmael, which was to be so important in the fifth century.

Before that, however, two other significant applications of collective nomenclature have to be noted. Firstly, as early as Strabo, a tribe or people called

58. See Eusebius, *HE* 6, 33. The title of the article by G. Kretschmar, "Origenes und die Araber," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 50 (1953): 258, is thus potentially misleading. If there was in reality anything distinctively "Arab" in the heresies concerned, there is as yet no way of demonstrating it.

59. Origen, *C. Cels.* 5, 48, 3.

60. Eusebius, *PE* 6, 11, 69 (29/3b).

61. Philostorgius, *HE* 3, 4.

Agraioi had been listed among the peoples of the Arabian peninsula. Pliny in his *Natural History* notes them also, as does Ptolemy in his *Geography*.[62] But Ptolemy also lists, as one *ethnos* among others, the *Thamudēnoi* (text to n. 9 above), and also the *Sarakēnoi*, who thus make their first appearance in Graeco-Roman literature. *Sarakēnoi*, or in Latin *Saraceni*, comes by the fourth century to be the standard term for any unsettled desert peoples living along the fringes of the Fertile Crescent, in the Negev and Sinai and in the mountainous Eastern Desert of Egypt. As such, the term is used by pagans, for instance, Ammianus Marcellinus, as well as by Christians, and normally has no religious or genealogical implications.[63] But with this extension of the term Saracens to all the unsettled peoples of the marginal steppe or desert zones there also went, but in Christian writers only, the attachment to it of the description Ishmaelites. It should be emphasised that *Sarakēnoi* had at one point, as Ptolemy's usage makes clear, been the name of one specific group, among others. But *Ishmaelites* never was; it had never been used by pagan writers, and was an appellation or characterisation whose meaning was derived from an interpretation of Genesis. Thus, for instance, in Jerome's vividly novelistic *Life of Malchus*, travellers on the road between Beroea and Edessa, where "Saracens" are described as roaming, are attacked (at a dramatic date around the middle of the fourth century) by a wild band of *Ishmaelites*. The two terms are clearly intended as synonymous.[64]

It was however still possible in the late fourth century to argue that the practice of circumcision by these peoples should be seen as a mere fact, with no religious significance. This is indeed firmly asserted by Epiphanius. "What have the Ebionites to boast of in practising circumcision, when idolaters and the priests of the Egyptians observe it? But so also do the 'Sarakēnoi,' who are also called 'Ismaēlitai,' observe it, as do the Samaritans and Jews and Idumaeans and 'Homēritai.' But of these most do not practise this as a matter of the Law, but by a sort of unreflecting custom."[65]

However, just about the time that Epiphanius was completing this work, in the later 370s, the first clearly attested collective conversion of a "Sara-

62. Strabo, *Geog.* 16, 4, 2 (767); Pliny, *NH* 6, 154; 161; Ptolemy, *Geog.* 5, 19, 2; see n. 8 above.

63. A few examples may be given, without any attempt at exhaustiveness: Eusebius, *HE* 6, 42, 4; *Pan. Lat.* 2 (12), 22, 3; 11 (3), 5, 4; Ammianus 14, 4, 1; 8, 5; 22, 15, 2; 23, 3, 8; 6, 13; 24, 2, 4, etc.; Julian, *Ep.* 27 Hertlein = 98 Bidez-Cumont = 58 Loeb (401D).

64. Jerome, *V. Malchi* 4.

65. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30, 33. See F. Stummer, s.v. "Beschneidung," *RAC* II (1954), on 160.

cen" people to Christianity was taking place. This was the un-named group, temporarily led—after the death of her husband—by a queen called Mavia.[66] They seem to have lived in the Sinai Peninsula, to have had a treaty relationship with Rome and to have rebelled in the spring of 378, spreading their ravages over the neighbouring provinces. When peace was made, it was on condition that this people should convert to Christianity, while they in their turn stipulated that a hermit from Sinai named Moses should be consecrated as their bishop. He was brought to Alexandria for this purpose.

To Rufinus (*HE* 11, 6) the people concerned were "a nation of Saracens"; to Theodoret (*HE* 4, 20) "tribes of Ismaēlitai"; to Socrates (*HE* 6, 38) again "Sarakēnoi." But it is Sozomenus, writing in the 440s, who attaches to this episode comments and explanations of his own, which are of the utmost importance in religious history and deserve to be set out in full:

> This is the tribe which took its origin and has its name from Ishmael, the son of Abraham; and the ancients called them Ishmaelites after their progenitor. As their mother Hagar was a slave, they afterwards, to conceal the opprobrium of their origin, assumed the name of Saracens, as if they were descended from Sarah, the wife of Abraham. Such being their origin, they practice circumcision like the Jews, refrain from the use of pork, and observe many other Jewish rites and customs. If, indeed, they deviate in any respect from the observances of that nation, it must be ascribed to the lapse of time, and their intercourse with the neighbouring nations. Moses, who lived many centuries after Abraham, only legislated for those whom he led out of Egypt. The inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, being strongly addicted to superstition, probably soon corrupted the laws imposed upon them by their forefather Ishmael. The ancient Hebrews had their community life under this law only, using therefore unwritten customs, before the Mosaic legislation. These people certainly served the same gods as the neighbouring nations, honouring and naming them similarly, so that by this likeness with their forefathers in religion, there is evidenced their departure from the laws of their forefathers. As is usual, in the lapse of time, their ancient customs fell into oblivion, and other practices gradually got the precedence among them. Some of their tribe,

66. For the best account, see G. W. Bowersock, "Mavia, Queen of the Saracens," in W. Eck, H. Galsterer, and H. Wolff, eds., *Studien zu anticken Sozialgeschichte: Festschrift F. Vittinghoff* (1980), 477. For Sinai, rather than the Hauran, as the primary location of this unnamed people, see Z. Rubin, "Sinai in the Itinerarium Egeriae," *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sulla Peregrinatio Egeriae 1987* (1989): 177.

> afterwards happening to come in contact with the Jews, gathered from them the facts of their true origin, returned to their kinsmen, and inclined to the Hebrew customs and laws. From that time on, until now, many of them regulate their lives according to the Jewish precepts. Some of the Saracens were converted to Christianity not long before the present reign. They shared in the faith of Christ by intercourse with the priests and monks who dwelt near them, and practised philosophy in the neighbouring deserts, and who were distinguished by the excellence of their life, and by their miraculous works.[67]

Sozomenus also adds to those remarks a further story of how at the time mentioned (the earlier fifth century) another whole tribe (*phylē*) under a tribal leader (*phylarchos*) called Zokomos had been converted when a monk had cured his childlessness on condition of his adopting Christianity. As I. Shahid suggests, this may be a reference to the important federate people, the Salihids.[68]

As has often been noted, however, the significance of the conceptions expressed by Sozomenus far outweighs any such narrative details.[69] For, firstly, Sozomenus brings out the full implications of the descent of the "Saracens" from Ishmael, even interpreting the name itself as a claim to descent from Sarah. Other Christian writers of this period, however, took the opposite view, taking *Agarēnoi* or in Latin *Agareni* as a general appellation for contemporary "Saracens." It seems quite likely that in doing so they were both generalising and attaching a genealogical meaning (descent from Hagar) to the tribal name *Agraioi* earlier attested in pagan sources, or perhaps to the HGRYM/*Agarēnoi* occasionally alluded to in the Bible.[70] Epiphanius at any rate states categorically that the name had been derived from Hagar: Ishmael, the son of Hagar, founded Pharan in the desert, and had twelve sons, "from whom (there descend) the tribes of the *Agarēnoi*, also called *Ismaēlitai*, but who are now called *Sarakēnoi*."[71]

Sozomenus' interpretation of this latter term (as relating to Sarah) seems

67. Sozomenus, *HE* 6, 38, trans. C. D. Hartranft in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (repr. 1976).

68. So I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (1989), 3ff.

69. See, e.g., M. Cook, *Muhammad* (1983), 81. The background is very fully discussed in Shahid (n. 68), 167–68.

70. See text following n. 20 and to n. 62 above. Cf. Jerome, *Ep.* 129, 4: "Not to mention . . . the Arabs and the *Agarenoi* now called Saracens." See J. Spencer Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in Preislamic Times* (1979), 312–13.

71. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 4, 6–7.

to have been unique to himself, and we cannot be certain how far the other ideas which he expresses would have been generally shared. But, like Philostorgius, he sees the "Ishmaelites" as having with time partially lapsed into paganism, while preserving some Jewish customs—circumcision and (he adds) abstention from pork. But what is unique and striking about his observations is his claim that contact with Jews, apparently recent, had led some of them to recognise their true origin and to return to Jewish customs.

We cannot tell in which region or regions Sozomenus means to suggest that this contact and reconversion took place—not presumably in Saba/Himyar, whose population was not, it seems, conceived of as "Ishmaelite"; possibly in the Hedjaz, but far more probably on the fringes of the Roman provincial area, or—most probably of all—in Sinai, to which (though he does not explicitly say so) the story of Mavia in fact seems to relate. But it is of crucial significance that he admits the reality of two separate paths to the recovery of the inheritance of Abraham which were being taken by "Ishmaelites" in his time: via Judaism and via Christianity.

The long and complex story surveyed here must end at this point. To the best of my knowledge we have little direct or contemporary evidence of active conversions to Judaism among the Arabs in the period of rather more than a century between the writing of Sozomenus' *Ecclesiastical History* and the birth of Muhammad; but Islamic sources do of course record that there were "Jewish" tribes in the Hedjaz in Muhammad's time. Their origin, whether by conversion or emigration (less likely), seems not be known.[72] But we do on the other hand have vivid narrative representations of "Ishmaelite" conversions to Christianity, from Sozomenus' contemporary, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, in his *Philotheos Historia*, a series of biographical sketches of the monks and hermits of the Syrian region in the fourth and fifth centuries.[73] Thus among the varied groups which came to see Symeon Stylites were "Ishmaelites" who thereupon renounced the worship of Aphrodite, accepted Christianity, and ceased to eat the meat of asses and camels (26, 13). A partial acceptance of Jewish dietary laws was thus said to have accompanied their adoption of Christianity. But the clearest parallel to Sozomenus' conception of the "Ishmaelites" as now having the opportunity to recover a lost ancestral heritage comes from Theodoret's account of an Ishmaelite called Abbas, who began by attaching himself to a hermit, named Marosas, living in the desert, before moving to the monastery of Teleda in 406: "There

72. Trimingham (n. 70), 249.

73. See P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Molinghem, eds., *Théodoret de Cyr, Histoire des Moines de Syrie* I–II (*Sources Chrétiennes* 234, 257, 1977 and 1979).

was in this sacred place someone—they give him the name of Abbas—who sprang from the Ishmaelite root, but was not banished from the house of Abraham in the manner of his forefather, but shared with Isaac in his paternal inheritance, or rather seized the very kingdom of Heaven itself" (4, 12). The slight hesitation at the end of the passage was of course wholly justified. For to share with Isaac the patrimony of Abraham now meant, in Sozomenus' conception, the adoption of an extreme form of Christian asceticism.

This paper cannot pretend to tackle the complex question of competing religious and cultural influences in the Roman provincial area and the Hedjaz in the period of over a century and a half between the composition of Sozomenus' *Ecclesiastical History* and of Theodoret's *Philotheos Historia* and the earliest preaching of Islam. Suffice to note that there is suggestive, if uncertain, new archaeological and epigraphic evidence from the Negev which seems to date to this period and to suggest the existence there of a monotheistic cult with an emphasis on Abraham.[74] All that is offered here is an analysis of how fluid the patterns of allusion to "Ishmaelites," "Arabs," and "Saracens" in Jewish and Christian writings were; equally, how these were influenced by the Greek ethnographic tradition of identifying contemporary "peoples" in terms of their descent from mythical "founders" or "forefathers"; and how central a place in the construction of a genealogical and religious connection between Jews and Arabs was occupied by Josephus. We cannot, it is true, be certain whether Josephus' identification of Arabs as the descendants of Hagar and Ishmael was original to himself, or whether he was the first to attribute the Arab practice of circumcision to their descent from Abraham. But no other Jewish writer known to us presented this view so consistently, or was so influential in later Christian thinking. Because of that influence, it is suggested here, he had an important posthumous role in the formation of Islam. It was not to be expected that Josephus could ever have occupied the honoured place given in the Koran to a succession of figures from both the Old and the New Testaments, including Mary and Jesus. But none the less it was the pattern of the very clear ethnographic choices which he made in retelling biblical history which was later to offer Christians the possibility of holding out to the "Saracens"—or "Ishmaelites"—of the desert a particular claim to share with them in the true inheritance of Abraham.

74. See Y. D. Nevo and J. Koren, "The Origins of the Muslim Descriptions of the Jāhilī Meccan Sanctuary," *JNES* 49 (1990): 23, esp. 41ff. I am very grateful to Jeremy Johns for this reference, and to Martin Goodman both for the opportunity to present these arguments at a seminar in Oxford in autumn 1991 and for a very helpful critical reading of the paper.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, A.D. 325–450: Language, Religion, and Culture[*]

For a historian who approaches the social, cultural, and religious history of the Near Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire in the period between Constantine and Mahomet, it does not take long to become painfully aware of having had few predecessors, or of the reasons why this might be so. For the evidence—literary, epigraphic, and archaeological—is immense, and in the sixth century, though not earlier, it is joined by two major collections of papyri, from Nessana and, very recently, Petra.[1] "Literary" in this context refers not just to vast ranges of text, in Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Jewish Aramaic, as well as retrospective narratives in Arabic, but to a truly remarkable series of original manuscripts in Syriac, starting with one, now in the British

[*] First published in *Mediterranean Archaeology* 11 (1998): 159–76.

This paper derives from a lecture which I gave at the seminar on "Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean in Antiquity" held at the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University in Canberra, on 10–12 November 1997. I am extremely grateful to Graeme Clarke, and also to Leena Messina, for the organization of the seminar, which formed the focal point of a profoundly rewarding and enjoyable stay at the Centre. It also owes something to a paper entitled "Jerome and the Near East," given at the Late Antiquity Research Seminar at Macquarie University on 14 November 1997, and at the University of Melbourne on 28 November 1997. These visits also were extremely rewarding. For very helpful comments on the text I owe many thanks to Graeme Clarke as editor, to Peter Brown, and to Sebastian Brock.

1. For the documentary papyri from Nessana, see C. J. Kraemer, *The Excavations at Nessana (Auja Hafir, Palestine)* III: *Non-literary Papyri* (1958), also listed in H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214, nos. 427–609; for the fullest preliminary report of the Petra papyri of the sixth century, see L. Koenen, "The Carbonised Archive from Petra," *JRA* 9 (1996): 177. See now *The Petra Papyri* I, ed. J. Frösén, A. Arjava, and M. Lentinen (2002).

Museum, written in Edessa in A.D. 411.[2] The corpus of inscriptions from this region and period, never collected or analysed, includes examples written in Latin, Greek, Syriac, Jewish Aramaic, Hebrew, and Arabic; and within this corpus two categories perhaps stand out as being of exceptional importance: the extensive mosaic inscriptions from Palestinian synagogues, written in varying combinations of Hebrew, Jewish Aramaic, and Greek (which thus represent the fullest *documentary* evidence for "Talmudic Judaism"); and the small, but extremely significant, corpus of pre-Islamic Arabic texts. The most important of these are both explicitly Christian, and date from the sixth century: a trilingual inscription of A.D. 511 from Zebed in northern Syria, in Greek, Syriac, and Arabic; and a bilingual one of A.D. 568 from the Lejja south of Damascus.[3]

This paper, however, will confine itself, as being a preliminary exploration of some aspects of ethnicity and communal identity in this area, to the period from Constantine's acquisition of the eastern provinces to the Council of Chalcedon of A.D. 451. Among other things it will briefly consider the identity attributed, by themselves and others, to "Arabs" (or "Saracens" or "Ishmaelites") in the period up to the mid-fifth century. It will also look, but again far more briefly than the evidence warrants, at both the Jews and the Samaritans, seen as ethnic, religious, and linguistic communities. If it is true, as generally believed, that the "Jerusalem" or "Palestinian" Talmud is a product of this period, it would be possible in principle to study the representations of both Jewish (and Samaritan) identity and non-Jewish identities as visible in its pages. But no attempt to do this will be made here, nor will the vast mass of Syriac writing be explored for the same purpose.

The complex interlocking issues of the representation of communal identities (whether self-ascribed or ascribed to other groups), of religious identities (for instance, in the representations of heresies, whether Christian or sub-Christian), and of the use and role of different languages, will thus for the moment be approached mainly through Greek and Latin texts, primarily literary works, but also inscriptions.

The relevance of Latin is, of course, the simple fact that the areas concerned are taken as being defined by their having been provinces of the Roman Empire. That fact has more relevance to the question of "ethnic iden-

2. See W. H. P. Hatch, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* (1946), no. I. See further text to nn. 20–22 below with notes.

3. The known pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions are listed in a paper which discusses in more detail some aspects of the topic treated here, F. Millar, "Il ruolo delle lingue semitiche nel vicino oriente tardo-romano," *Mediterraneo Antico* 1.1 (1998): 71. For the inscription of A.D. 568, see also n. 81 below.

tity" than it might seem at first sight. Firstly, it is quite a profound question whether the population of the Near Eastern provinces, all now Roman citizens and subject to Roman private law, saw themselves as "Romans," or regarded Roman history and tradition, or Latin literature, as in any way "theirs."[4] Alternatively, they and others might have identified certain cities, particularly some of those which had been made Roman colonies in the High Empire, as being distinctive pockets of "Romanness." The most obvious case is Berytus, where the teaching of Roman law remained important throughout late antiquity;[5] thus Jerome, for instance, in his *Letter* 108, duly attaches the label "colony" to Berytus.[6] At Heliopolis, always closely tied to Berytus, and also in the "colonial" zone, Latin public inscriptions continue unusually late, until the 340s;[7] but after that the specifically "Roman" character of the city is no longer evident. Jerome, the most important observer of the area writing in Latin, is also well aware of the complex successive transformations of the city which we naturally call "Jerusalem," but which, as he knew well, had been made into the Roman colony of Aelia Capitolina by Hadrian, and was now in the process of evolving from a pagan into a Christian city, and from a Latin- into a Greek-speaking one.[8] It is very significant that when Jerome alludes in passing to the career of Hilarion, the important ascetic from Gaza of the first half of the fourth century, he stresses that the saint had deliberately avoided Aelia Capitolina, to keep himself away from the taint of pagan customs.[9]

4. To my knowledge, the topic of the awareness of being citizens of the Roman Empire on the part of the inhabitants of the Near Eastern provinces in the late Empire has not been discussed in depth. For a starting point, G. Dagron, "Aux origines de la civilisation byzantine: langue de culture et langue d'État," *Revue Historique* 241 (1969): 23, reprinted in his *La romanité chrétienne en Orient: Héritages et mutations* (1984), no. I. From a different perspective, note J. Geiger, "How Much Latin in Greek Palestine?," in Hannah Rosén, ed., *Aspects of Latin* (1996), 39.

5. Note for instance the description of Berytus in the fourth-century *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, ed. J. Rougé (1966), 25, as "containing lecture-halls for the teaching of the law."

6. Jerome, *Ep.* 108, 8.

7. See F. Millar, "The Roman *Coloniae* of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations," in H. Solin and M. Kajava, eds., *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History* (1990), 33–34 (= chapter 8 of the present volume).

8. For Aelia Capitolina as a *colonia*, see Millar (n. 7), 28–30. For Jerome's allusions to the previous history of the city, see, for example, *Com. in Danielem* 3, 9, 24 (*CCL* LXXVA, 865–89); *Com. in Ieremiam* 4, 15 (*CCL* LXXIV, 186).

9. Jerome, *Ep.* 58, 3–4.

By and large, neither a "Roman" ethnicity nor the Latin language, so far as can be seen, played any significant part in determining personal or group identity in the Near East in this period, either in society in general or within the Christian church. The most specific allusion to the communal use of Latin is provided by the report from the western pilgrim Egeria or Aetheria in the 380s, of the presence of Latin-speakers, some of whom are at one point called *Graecolatini* (speakers of both Greek and Latin), in the Christian congregation in Aelia Capitolina. But, if anything, the account indicates how rapidly Aelia Capitolina had become a predominantly Greek-speaking place. This report, discussed in more detail below, in any case, gives much more prominence to the presence of speakers of Syriac or Aramaic.[10]

Given that the formal status of those of the cities of the region which were Roman colonies is hardly expressed any longer in the evidence from this period,[11] it ought all the more to be stressed that the entire area of all the provinces concerned was divided between Greek cities and their territories. With the literally marginal exception of Arab or Saracen allies (*foederati*) under their tribal leaders (*phylarchoi*), to which we will come later, there were in the late Roman Near East no local territorial political formations of any kind other than Greek cities. This fundamental fact has to be stressed also as regards Palestine; the Jewish and Samaritan populations living there represented very important and distinctive ethnic, religious, and to some extent linguistic communities, in some sub-regions apparently constituting a majority of the population. But the political and governmental structures within which they lived were those of Greek cities with their surrounding territories.

As for what meaning one should attach to the expression "Greek city," as represented in this region in the fourth century and the first part of the fifth, there has in fact been remarkably little research. Apart from the excellent work of Liebeschuetz on Antioch,[12] based on the speeches and letters

10. Text to nn. 27–29 and text to nn. 52–54 below.

11. Note, however, the isolated reference in the *Acta* of the Council of Chalcedon to Tyre as a *kolōnia* (Millar [n. 7], on 37), and the striking allusions in the Petra Papyri to the city as an "Augustokoloneia" and as "mother of colonies" (*P. Petra* 1, lines 4–5, cited above in chapter 8 of the present volume in text to n. 194).

12. J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Late Roman Empire* (1972). But see, for instance, C. Lepelley, ed., *La fin de la cité antique* (1996); A. Walmsley, "Byzantine Palestine and Arabia: Urban Prosperity in Late Antiquity," in N. Christie and S. T. Loseby, eds., *Towns in Transition: Urban Revolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (1996), 126.

of Libanius, it is hard to find more than scattered hints of the functioning of the traditional civic institutions of the Greek city, the assembly (*ekklēsia*), city council (*boulē*), and annual magistrates (*archontes*). Theodoret, for instance, refers in passing to a man "of bouleutic rank" from the small city of Zeugma on the Euphrates.[13] Or, in greater detail, the emperor Julian, in his last letter, describes how he received a delegation from the city council of Antioch at his stopping place at Litarbae, a village in the territory of Chalcis, and then went on to Beroea, where he sacrificed on the acropolis and delivered a brief address to its city council.[14] But how the internal government and communal life of the long-established pagan cities evolved in this period it is not yet possible to say. There have, however, been important studies of the survival of pagan cults and ceremonials,[15] and our sources also give ample evidence of physical attacks on temples by Christians, and the conversion of some of them into churches.[16] Mark the Deacon's *Life* of Porphyry, the bishop of Gaza, represents the fullest picture available to us of a still-pagan city, whose temples succumbed to violent Christian assault early in the fifth century.[17]

In this context it will be sufficient to touch only in passing on the Greek cities and on the peaceful or violent progress of their Christianisation, while admitting the limited extent of modern study; for, whatever else was at stake, issues of ethnicity and language do not seem to have been important in this context. For, just as the cities seem all to have been, in the conduct of their public business, Greek, so also was the Christian church. On the pagan side, I know of almost no contemporary sources which represent any pagan cult of this period as having been the expression of a non-Greek "ethnicity" or communal identity, or as having employed any language other than Greek (one puzzling exception is noted below, n. 62). On the Christian side, there is every indication, as we will see, that at least as regards its governing structures, its modes of communication between bishops, or between bishops and the state, and in its public expression in the form of inscriptions (the only strictly contemporary testimony), the church in the Near East was still

13. Theodoret, *Hist. Rel.* 5, 1.

14. Julian, *Ep.* 98 (Bidez/Cumont).

15. See esp. H. J. W. Drijvers, "The Persistence of Pagan Cults and Practices in Christian Syria," in N. Garsoian, ed., *East of Byzantium: Syria and Byzantium in the Formative Period* (1982), 35, and F. R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization, c. 370–529* I–II (1993).

16. G. Fowden, "Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire A.D. 320–435," *J. Theol. St.* 29 (1978): 53.

17. H. Grégoire and M.-A. Kugener, eds., *Marc le Diacre, vie de Porphyre, évêque de Gaza* (1930).

predominantly a Greek-speaking organisation (or network of linked local organisations).

That may seem a rash and unsustainable claim, and it is indeed only valid in the strict terms in which it is expressed. For, if we look at the wider context from other angles, it is beyond doubt, firstly, that the use of a Semitic language, Syriac or Aramaic, in various dialects, was characteristic of all the Roman provinces of the Near East. Secondly, it is of crucial importance that the Roman imperialism of the later second and early third centuries had led to the acquisition of northern Mesopotamia, which rapidly emerged as the heartland of a Christian literature in Syriac, whose greatest exponent, Ephraim, was born in Nisibis in the early fourth century, and died in Edessa in 373. Thirdly, it was the great Christological disputes of the early fifth century which were to lead in the end to the emergence of two Syriac-speaking churches, separated from the Greek Orthodox Church, namely the Nestorian Church (or Assyrian Church of the East) and the Monophysite Church (or Syrian Orthodox Church).[18]

Should we therefore not see Near Eastern Christianity in this period as a zone of conflict or tension between two competing ethnicities, Greek on the one hand and "Syrian" on the other? Our first problem is how to characterise and name the non-Greek language concerned. To summarise a discussion pursued in more detail elsewhere,[19] it should first be stressed that contemporary observers experienced no such problem. To them, the Semitic language in use in Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia was simply "the Syrian language" (*dialektos* or *glōtta*, or in Latin *Syrus sermo*). Our problem arises *only* from the modern convention of using "Syriac" in a more restricted sense, to denote the script, dialect, and (by now) Christian language of culture which had evolved not in Syria but in Mesopotamia. If we indeed confine "Syriac" to this more limited application, we have to find another term, "Aramaic," for the Semitic language which (as, for instance, Theodoret attests) was spoken by many in Syria proper (and had earlier been used in public written form in Palmyrene inscriptions, though no longer was), or for that which appears on Jewish and Samaritan inscriptions from Palestine (as well as being the language of the "Palestinian" Talmud), and which was also spoken by others in the wider Palestinian area.

18. For an illuminating essay on this slow process of separation, see M. Lichtheim, "Autonomy versus Unity in the Christian East," in L. White, ed., *The Transformation of the Roman World: Gibbon's Problem after Two Centuries* (1996), 119. For a survey of the evidence for the Syriac-speaking churches, see M. Albert, *Christianismes Orientaux. Introduction à l'étude des langues et des littératures* (1993), 297ff.

19. F. Millar (n. 3).

In many ways, it might be more convenient to follow contemporary nomenclature, and to use the expression "Syriac" for all of these different varieties of the Semitic language concerned, keeping distinctive names only for Hebrew and Arabic. The only reason for not doing so is that this usage would tend to obscure three closely related parallel developments which are significant, and which all show how "Syriac" (in the narrower sense), as both a distinctive script and as a Christian language of culture, came to spread slowly westwards from Mesopotamia across the Euphrates to northern Syria, beginning (just about) in the fourth century, and becoming more fully established there in the fifth and sixth centuries. I refer to three different aspects. Firstly, there is the composition of Christian literary works in Syriac, something which is not attested in Syria proper (the areas which the Romans called "Syria") until the first half of the fifth century.[20] Then there is the impressive and very important series of dated Syriac manuscripts, already referred to (n. 2 above), which begins with one written in Edessa in A.D. 411, and which often indicates the place of writing also. The earliest surviving Syriac manuscript attested as written west of the Euphrates seems to be one written at Mabbug (Hierapolis) in A.D. 510/11.[21] Finally, there are Syriac inscriptions on churches. The earliest example seems to be represented by a small group of Greek and Syriac inscriptions from Zebed, not far west of the Euphrates, and dating to about 337, and the next comes from the limestone massif east of Antioch, dating to 387: but this is a single transliterated Greek name, accompanying a Greek text.[22] There are some more cases from the fifth century, but the majority belong to the sixth.

It is important not to miss the significance of the westward spread of Christian literary composition, manuscript copying, and epigraphy in Syriac (in the narrow sense). But, that said, it is also relevant to look at what contemporary sources record of the currency of "the Syrian language," in the

20. The most systematic available survey of Christian writing in Syriac is still I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Patrologia Syriaca*[2] (1965), which records no writers in Syriac whose place of origin lay west of the Euphrates until (91ff.) Balai or Balaeus, a Syriac poet of the first half of the fifth century who came from near Beroea. For this point, note now also S. P. Brock, "Syriac Culture, 337–425," in A. Cameron and P. Garnsey, eds., *Cambridge Ancient History* XIII[2]: *The Late Empire, A.D. 337–425* (1998), 708–19, on 715.

21. Hatch (n. 2), no. VIII. For this extremely important topic, see now also M. M. Mango, "Patrons and Scribes Indicated in Syriac Manuscripts, 411 to 800 A.D.," *Jahrb. d. Öst. Byz. Ges.* 32 (1982): 3; and "The Production of Syriac Manuscripts, 400–700 A.D.," in G. Cavallo, G. de Gregorio, and M. Maniaci, eds., *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provincial di Bisanzio* I (1991), 161.

22. *IGLS* II, nos. 312–15 (Zebed); no. 555 (Babisqa, in the limestone massif).

wider sense, throughout the provinces concerned. The first thing to stress is that the nomenclature now used for the Roman provinces can be seen to have had a surprising influence on attributions of ethnicity. Without it being worth following in detail various boundary changes and transformations in the official designations of provinces, it will be enough to record that in the later fourth and fifth centuries, the relevant Roman provinces were as follows: "Mesopotamia" (the central part of the north Mesopotamian shelf, now deprived of Nisibis, which had been lost to the Persians in 363); "Osrhoene"; "Euphratensis" (the area of southern Turkey and northern Syria as far west as the Amanus, and stretching down the right bank of the Euphrates to Circesium); "Syria Prima" and "Secunda" (respectively the remaining northerly and central regions of Syria); "Phoenice" (roughly modern Lebanon); "Phoenice Libanensis" (covering much of the southern part of modern Syria, including Palmyra and Damascus); "Palaestina Secunda" (roughly Galilee); "Palaestina Prima" (roughly Judaea); "Palaestina Tertia" or "Salutaris" (the Negev and the southern part of the former kingdom of Nabataea, including Petra); and "Arabia" (roughly Moab and the Decapolis, including Philippopolis, Gerasa, and Philadelphia). Many of these names were either quite new, like "Euphratensis," or were new in their current official application. They all represented successive imperial choices and definitions, rather than being expressions of ethnicity.

It is therefore quite surprising to find that the most systematic late Roman observation which we have on the currency of "the Syrian language" in these regions makes quite systematic use of ethnics, or pseudo-ethnics, derived from these artificial provincial titles. The observation in question, like so many others, derives from a discussion of a passage in the Bible. It comes from the *Questions on the Book of Judges* by Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, and will have been written some time in the first half of the fifth century. Theodoret is commenting on Judges 12:6, in which the Gileadites are recorded as being able to identify whether people are Ephraimites or not by whether they pronounce a word "shibolet" (ŠBLT) or "sibolet" (SBLT)—and in the latter case proceeding to kill them. Theodoret comments: "In the same way, the Osroēnoi and Syroi and Euphratēsioi and Palaistinoi and Phoinikes use the *phōnē* of the Syroi; but all the same their *dialexis* exhibits many differences."[23] Theodoret does not deploy here ethnics derived from the names of all of the potentially relevant provinces, and in particular Mesopotamia and

23. *Quaestiones in Iudices* 19 (*PG* LXXX, cols. 507–9). My attention was drawn to this text by the excellent article by S. P. Brock, "Greek and Syriac in Late Antique Syria," in A. K. Bowman and G. Woolf, eds., *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World* (1994), 149.

Arabia are not represented. But the claim that there is a common language is unambiguous, as is, in the context, the use of *dialexis* to refer to variations of pronunciation. There may also have been variations of dialect (in vocabulary or grammar), but no claim as precise as that is made by Theodoret. The reference is to spoken language, and there is certainly no allusion to variations in script.

The non-Greek ethnicities which Theodoret envisages are therefore, on the one hand, a set of regional groupings, defined by Roman provincial territories (one of them, *Syroi*, being used in the specific sense of inhabitants of Syria Prima and Secunda), and on the other *Syroi* in a wider sense, namely all those using the relevant language. Are we then confronted with an ethnicity, or nationality, which could be seen, by the persons concerned or by others, as distinct from, or opposed to, that attaching to "Greeks"?

As indicated already, there is nothing to suggest the existence, anywhere within the Near Eastern provinces, of any political formations which were non-Greek, or "Syrian," in ideology or official language, and this is true even of the main cities of the primary area of Syriac Christian culture, Osrhoene and Mesopotamia (further evidence might of course disprove this generalisation, just as we would not necessarily have assumed that Syriac would have been in use for legal transactions in Osrhoene in the mid-third century, as is now shown by the three remarkable Syriac parchments of around A.D. 240).[24] The fact that the *Chronicle of Edessa*, which lists events in the history of the city up to A.D. 540, is in Syriac,[25] does not show that in the period with which we are concerned the city had used Syriac as its official language. The opposite is indeed implied by the two fourth-century Syriac martyr acts which recount events in Edessa in the Tetrarchic period, and which reveal a city whose public vocabulary is Greek.[26]

Was there nonetheless a "Syrian" section of society, or a recognisable Syrian *ethnos*, even if one which existed within political and communal structures which were predominantly Greek? It is Theodoret again who casts the most light on this question. Speaking of Ephraim, in the course of giving a list of the most prominent representatives, both Greek and Latin, of ortho-

24. Listed with references in Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 1), nos. 157, 159, and 160. See now H. J. W. Drijvers and J. F. Healey, *The Old-Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene* (1999), app. I, P1, P2, and P3.

25. For the Chronicle, see L. Hallier, *Texte und Untersuchungen* IX (1892), and F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993), 464–67 and app. C. The text is also reprinted in F. Rosenthal, ed., *An Aramaic Handbook* II.1 (1967), 23–25. English translation by J. B. Segal, *Edessa: "The Blessed City"* (1970), 24–25.

26. Millar (n. 25), 486–87 and app. C.

dox conceptions of Christ, he describes him as "the lyre of the Spirit, who daily refreshes with the waters of grace the *ethnos* of the *Syroi*."[27] As we will see in a moment, there is more than adequate anecdotal evidence to show that *speakers* of "the Syrian language" could be found in the two Syrian provinces, in Palestine proper and in what was now called Palestina Tertia. But were they, or some of them, also *readers* of the works of Ephraim (who had died in 373), works which will have been written in the distinctive Estrangela script which we can see in the surviving fifth-century manuscripts? Or were readers of his writings, as preserved in the original Syriac (many were also translated into Greek), all to be found east of the Euphrates? The probability is, as the scatter of Syriac inscriptions mentioned above suggests, that his works, in this Syriac form, did find readers also in Syria, and perhaps also in Palestine. Theodoret reveals similarly that he had found two hundred copies of Tatian's *Diatessaron* in use in the churches of his see of Cyrrhus, until he brought this unorthodox practice to an end. It seems to be implied, but not unambiguously, that these were in the Syriac version, rather than the Greek.[28]

That there were speakers of "the Syrian language" in these areas is beyond doubt, and a few examples will suffice. Theodoret's account of the monks of Syria in his *Philotheos Historia* gives repeated testimony to this for Euphratensis and Syria, and also represents Abraames, bishop of Carrhae, but who came originally from the *chora* (city territory) of Cyrrhus, as unable to understand Greek at all.[29] For the same area, Jerome, reporting from his first trial of the monastic life, in the desert of Chalcis in the 370s, makes clear that when there he needed to use the *Syrus sermo*.[30] It is Jerome too, in his *Life of Hilarion*, who represents "the Syrian language" as being spoken both in Gaza and (but by persons described as Saracens) at Elusa,[31] places in the province now called Palaestina Tertia; and it is he also who describes how at the funeral of Paula in Aelia Capitolina, psalms were sung in Greek, Latin, and the *Syrus sermo*.[32] His evidence tallies very well with that of the pilgrim Egeria or Aetheria, mentioned above, who records that in Aelia Capitolina some of the Christian congregation could speak both Greek and *siriste* (in Syrian), and some only the one or the other. The bishop, however, even if he could speak *siriste*, invariably used only Greek, while a presbyter interpreted his words *siriste*.

27. Theodoret, *Ep.* 146 (*Correspondance* III, ed. Y. Azéma, 190).

28. Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* I, 20 (*PG* LXXXIII, col. 372).

29. E.g., Theodoret, *Hist. Rel.* 10, 9; 13, 2; 7; 14, 2; 21, 15. Note esp. 17, 9 (Abraames).

30. Jerome, *Ep.* 17, 2.

31. Jerome, *Vita Hilarionis* 13, 6–7; 14, 4; 16, 4 (*Saraceni* at Elusa).

32. Jerome, *Ep.* 108, 29.

The same procedure, she goes on, applied to any *Latini* who were present: in order that they should not be "saddened," *fratres et sorores graecolatini* ("the brothers and sisters who spoke both Greek and Latin") had the task of translating for them.[33] It is important to stress that there is no implication in any of the reports relating to Aelia Capitolina that the Christians there who spoke "the Syrian language" were converted Jews (any more than were those who spoke the same language in Gaza). On the contrary, we are seeing here slight but significant evidence for the Semitic language of at least a section of the gentile population of Palestine.

None of this evidence, however, suggests that we should conceive of "Syrians" in the Near East as having represented an *ethnos* in the strong sense of a self-conscious "nationality" transcending provincial boundaries. Nor, to sum up what is at this moment hardly more than a preliminary impression, should we see the major theological divisions of the period, the doctrine of the Trinity on the one hand and Arianism on the other in the fourth century, or rival conceptions of the divine or human nature, or natures, of Christ in the fifth, as either arising from or being marked by ethnic or linguistic divisions within the church.[34] Rather, the conceptual model provided by the liturgy at Aelia Capitolina, and in a different way by the gradual appearance in northern Syria of Syriac church inscriptions along with Greek ones, is surely correct. The rise of Syriac as a Christian language of culture, very significant as it was, took place within the framework of a predominantly Greek church, and was not (or was not yet) a challenge to it. It is at least very suggestive that the earliest inscriptions from this region which mark Christian churches or sacred sites, and which date to the middle of the fourth century, are all in Greek. This is true, for instance, of the tomb of Ioulianos "beside the boundary of the common *koimēterion* [dormitory] of the Christians," erected at Umm-al Jimal in 344;[35] of the sanctuary of Saint Sergius established at Eitha in the Hauran in 354/5;[36] and of the building with a Christian inscription at Dar Qita in the limestone massif, of the 340s to 350s.[37] These three very early epigraphic reflections of the Constantinian revolution do not come from urban locations, but all belong in the context of that rapid growth of

33. *Pereg.* 47, 3–4, ed. P. Maraval, "Egérie, Journal de Voyage," *SC* 296 (1982).

34. See F. Millar, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria," *JRS* 61 (1971): 1–17 (= chapter 10 of the present volume), where the accepted interpretation of Paul's career, along ethnic lines, is rejected.

35. *PAES* III. *Greek and Latin Inscriptions in Syria. A.3. Southern Syria* (1913), no. 262.

36. Le Bas-Waddington, *Inscriptions grecques et latines* (1870), no. 2124.

37. *IGLS* II, no. 542.

villages and small towns which took place in this period in parallel with the process of Christianisation. Nisibis, by contrast, was a significant city, and was also the birthplace, and the original place of residence, of Ephraim, the greatest of Christian writers in Syriac. But, none the less, the earliest Christian inscription from there, recording the construction of the baptistery (which is still standing) by bishop Vologaeses in 359/60, is again in Greek.[38] Only a decade later, Nisibis was to be lost to the Persians. But the churches of the central and western part of Mesopotamia, and of Osrhoene, areas which remained Roman, continued to use Greek as their official language. It is perhaps no surprise that the emperor Julian would write in Greek to the people of Edessa.[39] But so also, in the fifth century, would Theodoret to the bishops of Constantina and Edessa.[40] So far, at any rate, Greek and Syriac literary culture could co-exist in such cities. The church historian Socrates, for instance, can relate how, in the first half of the fourth century, Eusebius, later an important Christian theologian, was educated in pagan Greek learning in Edessa before subsequently becoming bishop of Emesa (which was now in "Phoenice Libanensis"). A very learned recent study of Eusebius' exegesis of Genesis, itself written in Greek, shows that he could and did refer to "the Syrian" text; Eusebius seems to have been the earliest theologian writing in Greek to do so.[41]

As regards the main body of the Christian church in the Near East, therefore, the conclusion seems to be clear, for the period up to A.D. 450 at least. The church mirrored the long-established (but also still developing) network of Greek cities in being essentially, in its structure and public functioning, a Greek-speaking organisation. But it differed from the Greek city in allowing a certain public role for the use of "the Syrian language." This distinctive attitude is apparent in various contexts. For instance, Greek ecclesiastical writers also readily acknowledged the literary and spiritual quality of Christian writing in Syriac. The writing and copying of Syriac texts slowly spread westwards across the Euphrates, mirroring the slightly earlier spread of ecclesiastical inscriptions in Syriac, often put up in association with Greek ones.

38. F. Sarre and E. Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat-und Tigris-Gebiet* II (1920), 337. For a photograph, see pl. CXXXVIII in vol. IV. Republished by J. Jarry in *Annales Islamologiques* 10 (1972): 207, on 242–43.

39. Julian, *Ep.* 115 (Bidez/Cumont).

40. Theodoret, *Ep.* 52 (to Ibas, bishop of Edessa); 53 (to Sophronius, bishop of Constantina), in *Correspondance* II, ed. Y. Azéma (1964), 128–31.

41. Socrates, *HE* 2, 9. See R. Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress: The Use of Greek, Hebrew and Syriac Biblical Texts in Eusebius of Emesa's Commentary on Genesis* (Traditio Exegetica Graeca 6, 1997).

The liturgy, in Aelia Capitolina at least (we have no evidence for elsewhere), allowed for repetition in "the Syrian language" of the bishop's words uttered in Greek. Theodoret, in particular, like Eusebius of Emesa (n. 41 above), also shows himself well aware of the existence of a Syriac version of the Bible.[42] And finally, Theodoret's *Philotheos Historia* shows a few cases where monastic communities in northern Syria and Euphratensis divided, apparently amicably, into separate sections using Greek and "the Syrian language" respectively.[43] The evolution which was to lead to distinct Syriac-using churches had not yet occurred. But it is still very significant that Syriac, or "the Syrian language," had acquired a place within the church which no Semitic language had ever enjoyed in any pagan city using Greek as an official language—with the sole and notable exception of Palmyra, whose bilingual epigraphy, in Greek and Palmyrene, had ended forever (as it seems) in the 270s.[44]

If the surviving pagan cults of the Near East did not find any written expression in languages other than Greek, and if "the Syrian language" can be seen as only slowly acquiring a public role within the Greek-speaking church, that does not mean that major issues were not associated with the interplay of ethnicity, language, and religion. For a start, the roots of Christianity in Judaism, combined with the still very visible role of the Jews, primarily in Palestine but also outside it (for instance, in Antioch and Apamea), and also of Samaritans, led to a marked uncertainty about historical identity and legitimacy, to tensions over the possible attractions of Judaism or of the Hebrew Bible, and to a heightened awareness of real or imaginary fringe groups of a heretical disposition, some of whom allegedly inhabited a variety of specific locations, often very obscure, in the Near Eastern provinces. I will look briefly at some of these Christian representations of heretical "others," before touching on the quite complex issue of the Jews and Samaritans of this period, when considered as distinctive ethnic religious and linguistic communities. I will then turn finally (and equally briefly) to the fringe group

42. E.g., *Quaestiones in librum primum Regnorum, praef.* (*PG* LXXX, col. 530: "The first book of Kings is called Samuel both among the Hebrews and the Syrians." Cf. *Com. im Ezechielem* 27, 8 (*PG* LXXXI, col. 1077).

43. Theodoret, *Hist. Rel.* 4, 13 (the monasteries at Teleda): "some chanting the poet in Greek, some in the local language." Cf. 5, 5 and 6 (the monastery of Pouplios near Zeugma): "Theogenos inherited the leadership of (those of) the Greek tongue, and Aphthonius of the Syrian."

44. See Millar (n. 7), text to nn. 158–71 of chapter 8 of the present volume; cf. also "Latin in the Epigraphy of the Roman Near East," in H. Solin, O. Salomies, and U.-M. Liertz, eds., *Acta Colloquii Epigraphici Latini. Helsinki 3–6 Sept. 1991* (1995) = chapter 9 of the present volume, text from n. 17 onwards.

whose newly acquired identity was to prove the most significant of all, the Arabs, Saracens, or Ishmaelites.

One reason for treating religious groupings or communities, as understood by contemporary observers, as if they were indeed by their nature ethnic or linguistic units, is that this is just how they are portrayed in the most extensive survey of heresies written in this period, the *Panarion* of Epiphanius.[45] This is an exceptionally difficult work to assess, partly because a large part of its content is drawn from much earlier writers (for instance, Irenaeus and Hippolytus) without any regard for whether the heretical groupings represented still existed (or indeed ever really had existed). How far we can use Epiphanius' testimony as real evidence for the variety of religious practice in his period seems to be still quite uncertain. What is significant, however, for the understanding of contemporary representations is his conception of a vast range of illegitimate and threatening options on the fringes of Christianity, and above all the fact that he starts from what one might call a pseudo-ethnic classification of forms of incorrect belief. Heretical sects are put into five groupings: "Barbarismos," "Scythismos," "Hellenismos," "Ioudaismos," and "Samareitismos" (*Pan.* 1, *pr.* 3, 2). He does not pursue this classification systematically in the course of the work, and indeed hardly could have. But in what follows he does often represent particular heresies as either ethnic or local groups. Like other writers to whom we will come later, for instance, he sees the Saracens as an ethnic group who owed their identity as "Ishmaelites" to their descent from Hagar and Ishmael (1, 8; trans. Williams I, p. 18). He can also give quite a detailed account of the Samaritans, noting their use of the Hebrew Bible, but only of the five books of Moses, and their rejection of the doctrine of Resurrection, while accusing them of lapsing into a form of idolatry, based on their devotion to Mount Garizim (*Pan.* 1, 9, 9; trans. Williams I, pp. 29–34). But this section, which would deserve further study, is immediately followed by one on the Essenes, which is written as if they still existed.

Equally problematic is Epiphanius' representation of a Judaeo-Christian sect, the "Nazēraioi," allegedly to be found at a variety of locations in the Near East: in Beroea in Syria, in the Decapolis near Pella, and at a village called "Kēkhabe" or "Chēchabe" in Batanea. They were distinguished by their recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, by their use of the Hebrew Bible, and by their observance of the Jewish Law, including circumcision and keep-

45. I do not pretend to understand how to read this very strange text. For a translation with helpful introduction, see F. Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* I–II (1987–94).

ing the Sabbath (*Pan.* 1, 29; trans. Williams I, pp. 112–19). But precisely this case shows that, no matter how polemical Epiphanius' intentions, and how regardless he was of the sources or dates of his information, we cannot always reject his constructions of heretical groups as fantasy. For instance, Jerome offers confirmation, based on the evidence of his period as a hermit near Chalcis in the 370s, that there was indeed a community of "Nazareni" in Beroea, who used the gospel of Matthew in its original Hebrew and had allowed him to copy it.[46] Moreover, documentary evidence, in the form of a remarkable Greek inscription of 318/19 from Deir Ali, south of Damascus, shows that Epiphanius' notion, which recurs several times in his work,[47] of a heretical community as established in a remote village, could correspond to reality. This long-known inscription served to mark a building identified as the "Sunagōgē of the Markiōnistai of the village of Lebaba of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[48] These Marcionites were therefore very self-consciously a local *religious* community but were not differentiated as either an ethnic or a linguistic one. In that, they will have resembled the various heretical village congregations in the territory of Cyrrhus which Theodoret claims to have "brought back to the truth": eight villages of Marcionites, one of Eunomians, and one of Arians.[49] These were real communities, which sometimes resisted the imposition of orthodoxy by force. But there is no implication that they were distinct in language or ethnic identity from their more orthodox neighbours.

It was thus perhaps most clearly at the (literal) borders of Jewish or Samaritan territory that there might arise sharp contrast, and conflicts between groups which might be (more or less) clearly differentiated, by ethnic identity, religion, and language. But before we touch on the relevant geographical area, it should be stressed that Christians could also feel the threat of the Jewish presence, as expressed in the form of communities living outside Palestine, possessing synagogues and observing the Law and the annual calendar of festivals, but apparently conducting their public, communal existence in Greek. This seems to be the implication of the well-known sermons against "Judaizing," preached by John Chrysostom to the Christians of Antioch, and warning them against attending the local synagogues and observing

46. Jerome, *der vir. ill.* 3; see *Ep.* 112, 13, and Theodoret, *Haer. fab. comp.* 2, 2 (*PG* LXXXIII, col. 389).

47. See, e.g., Epiphanius, *Pan.* 1, 40, on the teacher of the heresy of the "Archontikoi," who lived in a village called Kapherbaricha on the borders of the territory of Jerusalem and Eleutheropolis. Trans. Williams I, p. 262.

48. *OGIS*, no. 608.

49. Theodoret, *Ep.* 81, *Correspondance* II, ed. Y. Azéma (1964), 196.

Jewish festivals.[50] There is no implication that there was any linguistic barrier to such participation. Confirmation that this will have been so is provided by the contemporary mosaic inscriptions, of A.D. 391, from the synagogue at Apamea. They are all in Greek, and two of them specifically record that a section of mosaic in the church there had been paid for by Ilasios son of Eisakios, *archisunagōgos* of the Antiochenes.[51] Naturally, neither the evidence of John Chrysostom nor that of this group of inscriptions can suffice to prove that the Hebrew Bible played no part in the communal observances of these Jewish communities in north Syrian cities, or indeed that the Jews resident in Antioch or Apamea did not speak "the Syrian language." But it does strongly suggest that, in a way which shows some parallelism to the character of the still almost entirely Greek Christian Church of the area, these communities were not visibly divided by language from their wider environment.

It would not be surprising if the pattern of linguistic relationships were found to be different in the areas bordering on Palestine. This is at least suggested by the fact that the mosaic floor of the late-Roman synagogue, perhaps of the fifth century, discovered at Gerasa (Jerash) revealed one inscription in Aramaic and another in Greek.[52] In this area (the province of Arabia in Roman terms) it would (perhaps surprisingly) not be until the sixth century and after that a Semitic dialect, conventionally labelled "Christian Palestinian Aramaic," came to be used by Christians both for inscriptions and for texts on perishable materials.[53] In Gerasa, therefore, the use of Aramaic for a Jewish synagogue inscription, at a time when all the church inscriptions of the region were still in Greek, must have functioned as a conscious marker of identity, ethnic, religious and linguistic.

When we come, finally, to Palestine, we have to remember that both Egeria/Aetheria and Jerome record that "the Syrian language" was used, but in a subordinate role, in the Christian liturgy of Aelia Capitolina.[54] The Greek cities of the Palestinian provinces, by contrast, seem to have used only Greek in their public life and in written expressions of their public identity. It can be taken as certain, however, that the population of the region included people of gentile descent, both pagans and Christians, who spoke "the Syrian language." So also, we can be certain, did both Jews and Samaritans. Once again, therefore, it is the predominance of a sacred text in Hebrew, accompanied

50. See R. L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (1983).

51. *IGLS* IV, nos. 1319–37, esp. 1319–20.

52. J.-B. Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum II* (1952), nos. 866–67.

53. See, e.g., A. Desreumaux, "La naissance d'une nouvelle écriture araméene byzantine," *Semitica* 37 (1987): 95.

54. See text to nn. 8–10 and 32.

by the written use of Hebrew, and of what is always, in this context, called by moderns "Aramaic," by both Jews and Samaritans, which must be seen as a conscious assertion of a separate identity.

It must be stressed again that neither in the case of the Jews nor in that of the Samaritans did this identity find any formal expression in the shape of political or administrative control of any area. The religious and communal life of both groups was conducted entirely within the framework of a network of Greek cities, nearly all of which were now also the seats of Christian bishops, belonging to a predominantly Greek-language church.

That is not to say, however, that there were no areas where the Jewish community had the upper hand, and where the church found it hard to gain a foothold. This situation is clearly mirrored in the story told by Epiphanius in his *Panarion*, of Joseph of Tiberias, a converted Jew who was given the rank of *comes* by Constantine, and who was commissioned to establish Christian churches in communities which had none, namely Tiberias itself, Sepphoris (now called Diocaesarea), Nazareth, and Capernaum. In the face of resistance, he managed finally to construct a small church in Tiberias, and later succeeded in building churches in Diocaesarea "and some other cities" (no details are given).[55] The story is significant as a somewhat pale reflection of a Palestinian world in which not only Christians and Jews, but also pagans and Samaritans, lived in a complex symbiosis, in which contrasting communal, or ethnic, identities were expressed primarily through different religious practices. This symbiosis, or mutual conflict, was expressed also in the form of very conspicuously contrasting religious buildings: pagan temples (as in the story, mentioned above, of the wholesale destruction of those at Gaza early in the fifth century); Christian churches, now visible almost everywhere;[56] Jewish synagogues, now coming to be adorned with elaborate floor mosaics, sometimes containing extensive inscriptions; and Samaritan synagogues, identifiable above all by the use in their inscriptions of the distinctive Samaritan script.[57]

The immensely complex social, religious, and linguistic history of late Roman Palestine remains to be told, and no attempt is made here to go beyond touching on a few points. What is clear above all is that the story cannot

55. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 1, 30, 4–12.

56. See A. Ovadiah, *Corpus of the Byzantine Churches of the Holy Land* (1970); Y. Tsafrir, ed., *Ancient Churches Revealed* (1993).

57. See F. Hüttenmeister and G. Reeg, *Die antiken Synagogen in Israel I. Die jüdischen Synagogen, Lehrhaüser und Gerichtshöfe II, 533f.: Die samaritanischen Synagogen* (1977); L. I. Levine, ed., *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (1981); *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (1987).

properly be written as simply a stage in Jewish history;[58] perhaps the most drastic change in the period is precisely the Christianisation of the landscape of the Holy Land, and the erection of Christian churches and monuments at sites associated not only with the New but also with the Old Testament.[59]

In broad terms, the nature of Christian communal structures, under their bishops, is clear. It is much less certain (as mentioned earlier) how the self-governing Greek cities of these provinces now functioned, and how far they retained their pagan public cults, and their traditional calendars of festivals and of athletic and artistic competitions. Similarly, while it is clear that much of Jewish communal life centred on the synagogue, there are major historical questions about the actual authority exercised by the rabbis, the nature of Jewish internal communal jurisdiction, and the anomalous power of the patriarchs. The repeated appearance of the Jewish patriarchs in the imperial legal pronouncements of the late fourth century and the first half of the fifth, which are collected in the *Codex Theodosianus*, is clear evidence of a recognised public status, and of an authority extending in some respects beyond Palestine.[60] But this authority was anomalous precisely because it had no specific geographical expression. Even more problematic is the question of what, if any, collective organisation the Samaritans possessed, going beyond local synagogue congregations.[61]

In what sense did language serve as a marker of the distinctive identities of these rival religious communities? For the still (in principle) pagan Greek cities, as we have seen, there is nothing to suggest that "the Syrian language" was allowed to play any part in their public life. There are no reports suggesting this, and to the best of my knowledge there are no published examples of pagan public inscriptions in a Semitic language from this period.[62] By con-

58. Thus, for instance, M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule: A Political History of Palestine from the Bar Kochba War to the Arab Conquest* (1984) (a highly revealing title). Compare, however, G. Stemberger, *Jüden und Christen im Heiligen Land: Palästina unter Konstantin und Theodosius* (1987).

59. This process is visible immediately, for instance, in Jerome's translation and updating of Eusebius' *Onomasticon*, or in his *Ep.* 108, with its account of Paula's journey through Palestine in 385/6.

60. For the evidence, see the excellent collection and discussion of the relevant legal texts by A. Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (1987).

61. For a useful collection of the various types of evidence relating to the Samaritans, see A. D. Crown, ed., *The Samaritans* (1989).

62. I am very grateful to Sebastian Brock, however, for the information that there are as yet unpublished examples of Syriac inscriptions on pagan mosaics, apparently from private houses, from Israel, which may date to the fourth or fifth century.

trast, as we have seen, the church did already use "the Syrian language," if in a subordinate role, in its liturgy. But Christian *writing* in Syriac was still, so far as we know, characteristic of the area east of the Euphrates, with some examples from Syria proper appearing in the first half of the fifth century. We cannot confidently attribute to the Palestinian provinces of this period either Christian theological writing, or the copying of manuscripts, or the widespread erection of inscriptions, in "the Syrian language." It is significant, however, that the thirteen Greek inscriptions of the fifth century from the church excavated at Evron near Nahariya are accompanied by one Semitic-language inscription, in Christian Palestinian Aramaic script, perhaps of the first half of the century. If this pattern is indicative, Greek was still the predominant written language.[63] New evidence might change this picture at any time; but for the moment we should see the Christian church of Palestine as a Greek communal structure, in which "the Syrian language," spoken, and then also written, played a modest, but accepted, part.

Inevitably, given the dearth of internal information (unless we were to base our conceptions on what is reported in medieval Samaritan chronicles), such questions can hardly even be posed for Samaritan culture and communal identity. Outside observers duly recorded, as we have seen, that the Samaritans recognised only the books of the Pentateuch, and Jerome notes their distinctive upright script, using *antiquae Hebraeorum litterae* ("Paleo-Hebrew" in modern terminology), in which the *tau*, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, had a form very like that of a cross. He also observes, here agreeing with rabbinic tradition, that until the time of Ezra the Jews also had used this script, which the Samaritans still retained.[64] How he knew this, and where he will have seen any Samaritan writing, remains a mystery. Nor is it clear whether any Samaritan theological or exegetical writing can be shown to have belonged to this period. It remains possible that a major Samaritan work, the Memar Marqah, "The Teaching of Marqah," an extended reflection on the Pentateuch, may date to this time. If so, as it is written in Aramaic, it would supply conclusive evidence for the use of a dialect of Aramaic, written in their distinctive script, by the Samaritan community.[65] Jerome betrays no knowledge of a Samaritan literature, but if he did ever visit a Samaritan synagogue, he will indeed have been able to see their distinctive script in its

63. See V. Tzaferis, "The Greek Inscriptions from the Early Christian Church at Evron," *Eretz Israel* 19 (1987): 36*, and A. Jacques, "A Palestinian-Syriac Inscription in the Mosaic Pavement at Evron," 54*.

64. Jerome, *Com. in Ezechielem* 3, 9, 4/6 (*CCL* LXXV, 106); *Praef. in Libros Samuel et Malachim* (*PL* XXVIII, cols. 547–49).

65. See *Memar Marqah: The Teaching of Marqah*, ed. and trans. J. Macdonald, I–II (1963).

monumental form. The known cases are few, but just sufficient for our purposes. There are in fact two examples of Samaritan mosaic inscriptions from this period, at Tel Qasile (Ramat Aviv) and at Sha'albim, both fairly brief.[66] It is very significant that both are bilingual, in Hebrew (in Samaritan script) and Greek. That immediately raises the question, which applies with even more force to the Jewish community of Palestine, of what the everyday language of the Samaritans really was: presumably a particular variety of Aramaic, or in other words what a Graeco-Roman observer, had there been any, would have called "the Syrian language"? Or perhaps they will have used just the same variety as might (as Theodoret seems to imply, text to n. 23 above) have been spoken by any of the "Palaistinoi," whether gentile, Samaritan, or Jewish? Or was their everyday language in fact Greek?

The idea that in reality all the conflicting religious or ethnic communities of Palestine might have used both a version of "the Syrian language" and Greek, but in different ways, has a lot to commend it. The Jews and Samaritans were, of course, distinctive in basing their identity on a sacred text in Hebrew, the whole Bible in the one case and only the Pentateuch in the other. In the Jewish case a more recent work composed in Hebrew was also of central importance, namely the Mishnah, apparently compiled in the early third century, and accompanied by a mass of further writing in Hebrew, the *Tòsefta* ("addition"). We can be certain of the centrality of the Mishnah, since both the "Palestinian" and the "Babylonian" Talmuds are in effect commentaries on it. Both of them, however, as preserved, are written in dialects of Aramaic.[67] We can therefore presume a knowledge of Biblical Hebrew, and a capacity on the part of at least some people to read and understand Mishnaic Hebrew. The vast mass of material, with many Greek loan-words, represented by the "Palestinian" Talmud, a composition belonging to this broad period, strongly suggests that the Jewish version of "the Syrian language" was at least *a* language of common use in Palestine, without proving whether it was different from the Samaritan or Christian versions, or whether or not either Hebrew on the one hand or Greek on the other (as opposed to individual Greek loan-words) were also current in daily life among Jews.

The place-names reflected in the surviving sections of the "Palestinian" Talmud give a clear indication of the broad geographical zone from which

66. See R. Ovadiah and A. Ovadiah, *Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Mosaic Pavements in Israel* (1987), nos. 203 and 213.

67. For a basic guide, H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (1991).

it emerged: Galilee with Tiberias and Sepphoris, and also Caesarea on the coast.[68] The date of the work is much more uncertain, and might be as early as the mid-fourth century, or considerably later. The truly historical study of this Talmud has hardly begun.

If it were ever to begin, the starting point ought to be the now quite extensive, and extremely striking, series of Jewish synagogue mosaics of this period, with inscriptions in Hebrew and Aramaic (both written in the "square" Hebrew script), and in Greek. But the fact that Greek might have played a part even in the context of "rabbinic" Judaism is strongly suggested also by the evidence of an important contemporary observer, Jerome. As a serious student of Hebrew and of the Scriptures, he ought to have been of even greater importance for the study of "rabbinic" Judaism than he is, but for an accident of history. His monastic settlement was at Bethlehem in the territory of Aelia Capitolina, and hence lay precisely in that zone from which Jews had been driven out by Hadrian.[69] Although he did have some contacts with Jewish scholars, did study the Bible with their aid, and even toured Palestinian religious sites with one of them, he was not normally resident in the heartland of late Roman "rabbinic" Judaism, which was Galilee.[70]

None the less, it is extremely relevant for our purposes that he is able to deploy what was evidently an established Greek vocabulary to describe contemporary Jewish religious teaching. Writing of course in Latin, he says:

> Among the ignorant and the common herd Jewish interpretations present an appearance of reasonableness and human wisdom, whence their learned men are called *sophoi*, that is "wise men." And if on occasion, on fixed days, they expound their *traditiones* [doctrines], they are accustomed to say to their pupils *oi sophoi deuterousi* that is "the wise men teach *traditiones*."[71]

68. It would be an understatement to say that the geographical, historical, social, and indeed temporal context in which this Talmud was composed has yet to be studied properly. For some indications, especially useful as regards topography, see L. I. Levine, *The Rabbinic Class of Roman Palestine in Late Antiquity* (1989), which is focused on the third century. See also G. Reeg, *Die Ortsnamen Israels nach der rabbinischen Literatur* (1989), and L. I. Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (1992).

69. Jerome's life and work is very efficiently surveyed by J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (1975).

70. See, e.g., *Com. in Ecclesiasten* 4:13/16 (*CCL* LXXII, 288); *Praef. in com. in Iob.* (*PL* XXVIII, col. 1081); *Praef. in com. in Paralipomena* (*PL* XXIX, col. 401), on visiting sacred sites with *eruditissimi Hebraeorum* (the most learned among the Hebrews), and studying the text with a Jewish *legis doctor* (teacher of law) from Tiberias.

71. *Ep.* 121 (the *Liber Quaestionum*), 10/21–22.

Just before this, Jerome has given as examples the names of three reputed Jewish teachers, and the rules which they taught: "Barachibas and Symeon and Helles, our *magistri*, have transmitted to us the rule that we may walk [only] two thousand feet on the Sabbath."

The context of this observation is therefore surely Palestinian, and we should take seriously the possibility which Jerome's remark opens up, that for Jews Greek could have been not merely a secular language for everyday use, but might have had a place in the context of religious teaching. If we were disposed to dismiss this idea, the presence of Greek in the mosaic inscriptions of Palestinian synagogues would show beyond all doubt that it deserves to be considered.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that, by comparison with our evidence for the "Palestinian" Talmud, which consists of texts of uncertain date, based on medieval manuscripts which have only lately become the subject of modern critical editions, the synagogue mosaics of late Roman Palestine represent by far the most direct and important means of access to the religious life, language patterns, script, grammar, conceptions, and artistic conventions of "rabbinic" Judaism. All that will be attempted here is to sketch a few salient features. Even in this case, however, the treatment of many of these essential items of evidence remains profoundly unsatisfactory. In various instances the relevant archaeological reports have never been published, and in the case of some of the mosaic inscriptions, though bare transcriptions have been published, there have been no full studies of vocabulary, orthography or conceptual content.

The first important feature, which is evident on even the most cursory inspection, is the tendency of the synagogue mosaics to incorporate inscribed texts in two or three different languages. Thus the well-known texts of (probably) the earlier fourth century from the mosaic floor of the synagogue at Hammath Tiberias are in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Paradoxically, it is Hebrew which is used to identify the signs of the zodiac, while a blessing is given in Aramaic, and the names of benefactors appear (as at Sepphoris; see below) in Greek. It is in this context that we meet someone described as "a *threptos* (foster child) of the most distinguished *Patriarchai*."[72] By contrast, the vast mosaic floor of the synagogue at En-Geddi, itself never fully published, incorporates two extensive texts in Hebrew, and three in Aramaic, of which the last seems not to have been published to this very day. Those texts which have been (very summarily) published offer a strange compila-

72. See M. Dothan, *Hammath Tiberias: Early Synagogues and the Hellenistic and Roman Remains* (1983), 53ff. ("The Inscriptions"); Ovadiah and Ovadiah (n. 66), no. 87.

tion of elements: firstly, in Hebrew, a list of biblical ancestors, then the signs of the zodiac, then the Hebrew names of the months, and finally two brief lists of biblical figures. Then, in Aramaic, come the names of benefactors, and a list of offences which will incur divine punishment, followed by a two-line blessing, and finally an account, not yet published, of the repair of the synagogue.[73]

Even more striking is the long inscription, also never fully edited, from the mosaic floor of a synagogue at Rehov near Beth Shean (Scythopolis). As the excavations, conducted in 1974–80, have also never been the subject of a final report, the archaeological dating remains uncertain, but the later fifth century is suggested.[74] The inscription, written in Hebrew, comprises 29 lines and 365 words, and is thus by some margin the longest known documentary text from an ancient synagogue. What is more, this text incorporates versions of a passage from the *Tosefta* and one from *Sifre Deuteronomy*, along with two from the "Palestinian" Talmud (where they appear in Aramaic). The passages deal with the rules for tithing and for the Sabbatical year. All that need be remarked here is that the text, filled with contemporary place-names, some of Greek origin, and written in Hebrew, constitutes the decisive proof that in this period Hebrew was not simply a dead language, long since supplanted, as regards active composition, by Aramaic. In the contemporary context, it is clear, Jewish religious prescriptions could be current in both an Aramaic and a Hebrew version. This document also illustrates as concretely as anything could the maintenance of the rules of a religious community in a landscape marked by place-names which reflected the long-term effects of colonialism and the dominance of another language.

Even this text is rivalled in significance by the newly discovered synagogue-mosaic from Sepphoris, a place whose archaeological record strikingly demonstrates the co-existence of religious communities in late Roman Galilee.[75] The new mosaic, which is thought to date from the early fifth century, shows a succession of scenes from biblical history, with some written identifications of individuals and objects supplied in Hebrew; it shows the signs of the zodiac, also (once again) labelled in Hebrew; and it incorpo-

73. See Ovadiah and Ovadiah (n. 66), no. 73, and E. Stern et al., eds., *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* II (1993), 405ff.

74. See Ovadiah and Ovadiah (n. 66), nos. 206–8, and Stern et al. (n. 73), IV (1993), 1272ff.

75. For Sepphoris in the light of recent excavations, see, e.g., Stern (n. 73), IV, 1324ff.; and cf. R. M. Nagy, C. L. Meyers, E. M. Meyers, and Z. Weiss, eds., *Sepphoris in Galilee: Crosscurrents of Culture* (1996).

rates Greek inscriptions recording the names of dedicators or donors, and a fragmentary inscription in Aramaic.[76]

The mosaic synagogue-inscriptions of late Roman Palestine would deserve a full scholarly edition on their own, as uniquely vivid testimony to the values of an ethnic and religious community—but values which could be expressed in three languages, whose co-existence reflected the complex history of the region. If Hebrew was what above all distinguished the Jewish community, it was also shared with the Samaritans. But Greek was a Jewish language too, just as it was also a pagan, a Christian, and indeed a Samaritan one. All four religious communities, it seems clear, also used "the Syrian language."

Finally, in the fringe of the settled zone, there were the Arabs, Saracens, or Ishmaelites. They could be found anywhere, from Osrhoene to Syria, to Palestine, the Negev, and Sinai. We owe to Jerome a particularly vivid picture of the world of unsettled peoples which began not far south of Bethlehem, in the area of Tekoa, and stretched to Africa and central Asia.[77] I have explored elsewhere the significance of the fact that, following Josephus, Christian writers identified "Arabs" as the descendants of Hagar and Ishmael, and hence came both to give them an ethnic identity—of a purely legendary character—as "Ishmaelites," and as a consequence to see them as having a particular claim on the inheritance of Abraham, which had been lost in the intervening centuries.[78]

Contemporary conceptions and representations of Arabs as a distinctive group (or as a set of related groups), and as a strongly felt presence on the fringes of the settled zones, would be well worth exploring in detail, and would have to take into account allusions to them in Jewish and Syriac writings. But that is too complex and extensive a topic to embark on here. In this context we may, however, think briefly of the aspects highlighted in this paper, namely ethnicity, language, and religion. Firstly, as we have seen, mythical history taken from the Bible was deployed, by Christians and apparently also by Jews, to father on the "Arabs" or "Saracens" a common ethnic, and potentially religious, identity which cannot possibly have had any genealogical justification. As regards religion, while this attributed "ethnicity," which was unthinkable except by readers of the Bible, offered the Arabs a

76. Z. Weiss and E. Netzer, *Promise and Redemption: A Synagogue Mosaic from Sepphoris* (1996).

77. Jerome, *Ep.* 129, 4.

78. F. Millar, "Hagar, Ishmael, Josephus and the Origins of Islam," *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 44 (1993): 23 (= chapter 14 of the present volume). The key text is Sozomenus, *HE* 6, 38.

privileged position as potential converts to either Christianity or Judaism, they were acknowledged, in their present state, to be devotees of their own variety of paganism. Their potential conversion from pagan customs and dietary habits to Christianity is well represented in a passage, possibly not original, found in Theodoret's *Philotheos Historia*, in which large groups of "Ishmaelites" are described as arriving at Symeon Stylites' pillar, renouncing their idols and the rites of Aphrodite, and abandoning the eating of wild asses and camels.[79]

Seen as communities, or as social organisations, the Saracens were clearly distinguished from all the other groups who came within the purview of contemporary writers, firstly in having individual political and military leaders, either kings, apparently hereditary (or in the anomalous case of Mavia, a queen), or "tribal leaders" (*phylarchoi*). We can even catch a glimpse of the self-representation of an Arab king in the famous inscription of A.D. 328, in Arabic but written in Nabataean script, found at en-Nemara, east of the Hauran.[80] For a comparable example of self-representation by a *phylarchos*, we have to wait until after the period concerned here, when we find the bilingual inscription, in Greek and Arabic, which was put up in A.D. 568 at Harran in the Lejja: "Asraelos son of Talemos, *phylarch[os]*, founded the martyr[ion] of saint Ioannes" (as in the Greek version).[81] The immense significance of this inscription cannot be explored here: as documentary evidence of a *phylarchos*; as a perfect example of the way in which the Arabs were being drawn into the orbit of the (still predominantly Greek) Christian church; and as a quite early example of Arabic writing. It also, of course, happens to be almost exactly contemporary with the birth of Muhammad.

The Saracen or Arab groups were also distinctive in that they were militarised. Theodoret in fact continues, in his *Life of Symeon*, to recount a violent dispute between two "Ishmaelite" tribes (*phylai*) as to which of their *phylarchoi* should receive a blessing from Symeon, and further describes another *phyle*, this time identified as "of Sarakēnoi," as established at the fort (*phrourion*) of Callinicum, on the Euphrates.[82] But the military role of Saracen *foederati* (allies) on the eastern frontier of the fourth century and after is well known and has been sufficiently analysed by others.[83]

79. Theodoret, *Hist. Rel.* 26, 13.

80. See J. Cantineau, *Le nabatéen* II (1932), 49; Millar (n. 25), 434–35.

81. R. Dussaud and F. Macler, *Mission dans les régions désertiques de la Syrie moyenne* (1903), 324.

82. *Hist. Rel.* 26, 15–16.

83. M. Sartre, *Trois études sur l'Arabie romain* (1982); I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (1989); A. G. Grouchevoy, "Trois 'niveaux' de phylarques. Étude termi-

Although Theodoret makes frequent references, in the *Philotheos Historia* and elsewhere, to "Saracens" or "Ishmaelites" as belonging to an ethnic group clearly distinct from Greeks or *Syroi*, so far as I can find he nowhere refers to them as having a distinctive language, or still less a literature or a script. It is also striking that Jerome, when he describes how Hilarion encountered *Saraceni* near Elusa, says that they addressed him in "the Syrian language."[84] In fact, however, in Jerome and other writers, we do find some traces of awareness of Arabic as a distinct language. As is well known, Epiphanius in his *Panarion*, written in the later 370s, claims that in the pagan temple at Petra they worshipped a virgin goddess: "and in the *Arabikē dialektos* [Arabic language] they hymn the maiden, calling her *Arabisti* [in Arabic] 'chaamou,' that is 'girl' or 'virgin.' "[85] The report remains entirely isolated, and we can be certain, from the papyri mentioned above (n. 1), that even in the sixth century the public language of Petra was still Greek. But equally this reference cannot be dismissed, and Epiphanius' awareness of Arabic as a language is significant.

At about the same time Jerome was experimenting with life as a hermit in the desert of Chalcis in northern Syria, and he described himself as dwelling in that part of the desert which, while next to Syria, was in contact with the "Sarraceni"; or alternatively as being in the part "which marks out a vast marginal zone between the Syri and the Sarraceni." But it is either in "the Syrian language" or in Greek that he jokingly suggests in the letter that he might be found preaching heresy.[86] So far as I can find, he makes only one reference, much later, to *Arabicus sermo*, when he says in the preface of his *Commentary on Job* that he has worked out the sense of some difficult passages "from the *Hebraeus* and the *Arabicus sermo*, and sometimes from the *Syrus*."[87] How and where he would have encountered *Arabicus sermo* is quite obscure; we could however imagine that he might have heard something of the spoken Arabic of the "Saraceni" whose terrain, as we have seen, he envisaged as beginning just south of Bethlehem (text to n. 67 above). The reference can surely not be to written literary texts in Arabic; for, firstly, we have no reason to think

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nologique sur les relations de Rome et de Byzance avec les Arabes avant l'Islam," *Syria* 72 (1995): 105.

84. Jerome, *Vita Hilarionis* 16, 4: "Therefore having heard that St. Hilarion was passing by, since he had frequently cured many Saracens who were possessed by a demon, they came before him in crowds with their wives and children, bending their heads and shouting in Syrian 'Barech' which means 'bless [us?].' "

85. *Panarion* 51, 22; trans. Williams II, p. 51.

86. Jerome, *Ep.* 5, 1; 7, 1. *Ep.* 17, 2; see text to n. 30 above.

87. Jerome, *Praef. in com. in Iob.* (*PL* XXVIII, col. 1080).

that any such yet existed; and, secondly, even if they had existed, and had been written in Nabataean script, like the en-Nemara inscription mentioned above, it is still very unlikely that Jerome could have read them. In any case, our only scraps of evidence for writing in the Arabic script and language, dating from before the sixth century, are a couple of small graffiti from the margins of the settled zone.[88] Sozomenus, however, in the famous passage in which he relates the rising under Mavia, the conversion of her people to Christianity, and the descent of the *Sarakēnoi* from Ishmael, reports that the Saracen victories at that moment (the late 370s) were still remembered and "among the *Sarakēnoi* are [preserved] in *ōdai* [in songs]."[89] The passage thus shows a genuine awareness of the existence of (at least) an oral literature among the *Sarakēnoi*, even if it carries no implication that these songs could have been written down. Strictly speaking, in any case, though the passage might reasonably be held to imply an awareness of Arabic as a language, it does not name it specifically.

In the century and a quarter between the Council of Nicaea of A.D. 325 and that of Chalcedon of A.D. 451, the Near Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire can still, from one point of view, be seen as a zone of Greek culture, but a culture in which Christianity was ever more dominant. Within that overall framework, however, there also persisted an unbroken tradition of communal self-expression in Semitic languages by the two related "peoples of the Book," the Jews and the Samaritans, while a capacity for self-expression, within Christianity, by users of Syriac was rapidly developing and, in written form, was also beginning to spread westwards across the Euphrates, to an area where "the Syrian language" was already spoken by some. But no Christian communities yet had Syriac as their primary public language, and no separate Syriac-using churches had yet emerged. Nor are there clear indications that Christian theologians, whether writing in Greek or Syriac, explicitly associated heretical doctrines with the language used by the authors concerned. Ephraim wrote against a variety of heresies, including those associated with the names of Bardesanes, Marcion, Valentinus, and Mani, without relating their doctrines to a particular "ethnicity," or language. Equally, Theodoret, in discussing the doctrines of Nestorius, who came from the small Greek city of Germanikaia in Euphratensis, says nothing to identify him as a "Syrian."[90]

There must surely also have been pagans for whom dialects of "the Syrian

88. See, e.g., B. Gruendler, *The Development of the Arabic Scripts from the Nabataean Era to the First Islamic Century according to Dated Texts* (1993), 13ff. Millar (n. 3 above).

89. Sozomenus, *HE* 6, 38, 4.

90. Theodoret, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* 4, 12 (*PG* LXXXIII, cols. 432–36).

language" would have been the natural means of communal self-expression. But no such self-expression is perceptible to us. To the limited degree that it is still accessible to us, the pagan world of the Near East in this period was Greek-speaking. Instead, we can at least see the early beginnings of the process by which the "Ishmaelites" of the desert were to take on the identity which both Jews and Christians came to attribute to them, and which would lead two centuries later to the emergence of yet another "people of the Book," using a Semitic language and claiming an identity rooted in the Bible.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Dura-Europos under Parthian Rule[*]

No excuse is needed for returning again to the extraordinary series of discoveries made at Dura-Europos in the 1920s and 1930s. Whatever reservations we may have as regards the presuppositions of those who undertook these investigations, about their methods and procedures, and about the still incomplete publication of their results, the work done there still represents one of the most wonderful and creative chapters in the whole history of archaeology.

It is perhaps worth briefly repeating the main lines of the story of excavation at Dura, and subsequent publication, largely told in the posthumous book by Clark Hopkins.[1] It began, with a single day's visit, under the protection of British forces, by the Chicago Oriental Expedition of 1920—the visit which provided the only record of the then still undamaged frescoes in what is now known (without any textual justification) as the "temple of Bel," and which resulted in J. H. Breasted's wonderfully evocative book of 1924.[2] Already we can see what is at once the strength and the weakness of all the work done at Dura—the determination of all the participants to interpret (and to interpret immediately) whatever they found.

Breasted's book, which so eloquently records the dangers of travel along the Euphrates in the post-war period, had an introduction by Franz Cumont, and it was he who in 1922, and now under the protection of the French

[*] First published in J. Wiesehöfer, ed., *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse* (Historia-Einzelschriften 122, 1998), 473–92.

1. *The Discovery of Dura-Europos* (1979).

2. J. H. Breasted, *Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine Painting: First-Century Wall Paintings from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle Euphrates* (1924).

army, took the investigation further. In some senses, nobody could have been better equipped for the task. His great work on the monuments of the cult of Mithra had been published in 1899, his *Religions orientales* in 1907, and his *Études Syriennes* in 1917. But, equally, the whole tendency and purpose of his work lay in revealing the "oriental" element in later Graeco-Roman culture. He too was to demonstrate an almost unbelievable energy and creativity in relation to Dura. He spent there two periods of about four weeks each, in October–November of 1922 and 1923, on the basis of which he published in 1926 his book of over 500 pages, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, with a massive historical introduction, reports of excavations of two temples, and observations on other areas of the site, as well as the publication of a substantial group of documents on parchment, and of no less than 134 inscriptions (stone-cut, dipinti, and graffiti).

The two dominating figures in the great series of excavations which followed were to be Cumont and M. I. Rostovtzeff, who was by now established at Yale. The ten seasons of work from 1928 to 1936–37 were a joint enterprise between Yale and the Académie des Inscriptions, with the agreement of the French mandatory authorities and the Syrian government, and a contract to divide the moveable finds between Yale and the National Museum in Damascus. The extremely dangerous and unsettled conditions in which the work was conducted are described in Velud's article of 1988.[3]

Apart from the first season, which took place in spring 1926, and lasted two months, the remaining nine seasons occupied about six months each, from October or November to about April. The work will always be associated with the name of Rostovtzeff, and rightly so. But it is absolutely essential, if we are to understand the results of the excavations, to appreciate the point made in the introduction to the first *Report*, namely that he and Cumont are described as the *scientific* directors.

I have tried to stress elsewhere, in a brief paper in *Viestnik Drevnei Istorii*,[4] that the involvement of Cumont and Rostovtzeff in the excavations was fundamentally a matter of conception and interpretation. Preconception, one might say: for Rostovtzeff had actually promised Cumont in advance that the excavations would reveal a Mithraeum—and so, by some miracle, on Rostovtzeff's visit in 1934, they did. Cumont, summoned to Dura after the

3. Ch. Velud, "Histoire des recherches à Doura-Europos. Contexte historique régional des fouilles de Doura entre les deux Guerres mondiales," *Syria* 65 (1988): 363–82.

4. F. Millar, "M. I. Rostovtzeff i yevo rol' v rukovodtsve raskopkami v Dura-Europos," *Viestnik Drevnei Istorii* 3/218 (1996): 184–87, which gives an unjustifiably limited assessment of the personal involvement of Cumont and Rostovtzeff in the excavations.

discovery, published the Mithraeum himself in a section of the *Preliminary Reports* on the seventh and eighth seasons (1939, see appendix). He was then seventy-one, and Rostovtzeff sixty-nine.

I emphasise all this in order to make clear that the work, conducted under difficult and dangerous conditions, was carried out by an evolving team of quite young, and in many cases inexperienced, archaeologists, under the guidance of these two great figures. The work was carried out with great speed, while inevitably leaving untouched large parts of the city (see the plan of the city, and the indications of the areas excavated, in map 1 below). More important still, by no means all that was found was ever published, even in preliminary form. The approach of war, and the effects of the war on individuals, meant that much remained in the form of excavation notes and reports. To gain an impression of the incompleteness of it all, and the disruption caused by the war, it is instructive to read Susan Matheson's article (which in no way claims to be a full report) on the tenth season, of 1936–37, published in 1992.[5]

Even the wonderful series of *Preliminary Reports*, of which the ninth and last, on the season of 1935–36, was published only in 1952,[6] are not in fact in character preliminary reports at all, in the sense of formal presentations of raw data. They are much closer to general narratives on the one hand, and to discursive and wide-ranging interpretations on the other. For that reason they must rank among the most interesting, readable, and stimulating archaeological volumes ever written. But for that same reason, it would be both desirable, and extremely instructive, for the entire corpus of material from Dura, whether unpublished, embodied in *Preliminary Reports*, or set out in *Final Reports*, to be systematically reviewed. Such a review would on the one hand be a fascinating case study of a great excavation, conducted with unbelievable energy, and interpreted with perhaps too great intellectual force; and on the other it would be a review of what it is that we can actually claim now to know about Dura.

As regards the site as it now is, and what can be made of the interwar excavations, the papers published in *Syria* and in *Mesopotamia* offer some starting points for a review.[7] Some further excavations are also continuing. As re-

5. S. Matheson, "The Tenth Season at Dura-Europos, 1936–1937," *Syria* 69 (1992): 121–40.

6. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Preliminary Reports* (1929–52). Henceforth the single reports will be numbered according to the season: *First Season* = *Report* I etc. For the dates of each *Report*, see appendix below.

7. *Syria* 63 (1986): P. Leriche, A. Al-Mahmoud, B. Mouton, and G. Lecuyot, "Le site de Doura-Europos: état actuel et perspectives d'action," 5–25; A. Allara, "Les maisons de

gards Dura as it had been in the Parthian period, from the end of the second century B.C. to the 160s A.D., when Roman forces occupied it, the state of our knowledge is yet more precarious. Firstly, it is inevitable that the site, apparently deserted after the Persian conquest of the middle Euphrates area in the 250s, should, when excavated, have yielded most information about the eight decades of Roman occupation. It is to the spectacular finds dating to the Roman period that the majority of the most revealing volumes of the *Final Reports* relate,[8] and most of the contents of the wonderful *Final Report* on the parchments and papyri,[9] which is largely taken up with Roman military documents. The other *Final Reports* largely concern small finds. No *Final Reports* on private houses have been published, and I do not know if any are planned.[10] Nor do I know if there are any plans for a *Final Report* of the inscriptions. It is the lack of serious, coherent study of the inscriptions, which include regular stone-cut ones, dipinti (some of them on frescoes), and graffiti on walls and sherds—almost all types, in fact, except mosaic inscriptions—which is the greatest single weakness of the whole publication process. The inscriptions have to be considered as the main victim of the only partial continuation of the work on Dura in the period since the Second World War.

It is thus Roman Dura, with its remarkable concentration of different types of religious buildings, pagan, Jewish, and Christian, and its extraor-

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Doura-Europos. Questions de typologie," 39–60; P. Leriche, "Chronologie du rempart de brique crue de Doura-Europos," 61–84; P. Arnaud, "Doura-Europos, microcosme grec ou rouage de l'administration arsacide?," 135–55.

Syria 65 (1988): P. Leriche and A. Al-Mahmoud, "Bilan des campagnes de 1986 et 1987 de la mission franco-syrienne à Doura-Europos," 261–82; E. Will, "La population de Dura-Europos: une évaluation," 315–21; Ch. Velud, "Histoire des recherches à Doura-Europos. Contexte historique régional des fouilles de Doura entre les deux Guerres mondiales," 363–82.

Syria 67 (1992): P. Leriche and A. Al-Mahmoud, "Bilan des campagnes 1988–1990 à Doura-Europos," 3–28.

Mesopotamia: S. B. Downey, "New Soundings in the Temple of Zeus Megistos at Dura-Europos," 28 (1993): 169–93; E. Dabrowa, "Dall'autonomia alla dipendenza: le città greche e gli Arsacidi nella prima metà del I secolo D.C.," 29 (1994): 185–98; S. B. Downey, "Excavations in the Temple of Zeus Megistos at Dura-Europos," 30 (1995): 241–50.

8. C. H. Kraeling, *The Synagogue* (1956, reprinted with additions, 1979); C. H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building* (1967).

9. C. Welles, R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam, *Dura Final Report* V.1: *The Parchments and Papyri* (1959). The documents in this publication are designated *P. Dura*.

10. See, however, Allara (n. 7).

dinary range of different languages, Greek, Latin, Semitic (including Aramaic, Hebrew, Palmyrene, and Syriac), and Iranian (including some perishable documents which have still not been fully published),[11] that we can really encounter. It is probably best portrayed still in Bradford Welles' paper, "The Population of Roman Dura" (1951).[12] Even the Mithraeum, first attested in 168, just after the Roman takeover, belongs in this context.

For Parthian Dura, or Dura during the period of Parthian rule, we must expect to have much more limited evidence and should anticipate that many aspects of it will hardly be discernible at all—or alternatively might appear more clearly only if and when, for instance, the evidence on the evolution of private housing could be more fully analysed. I am in any case in no way equipped to analyse the data from small finds, and, as a historian, feel some confidence only when dealing with verbal evidence, with definable public or communal structures, like temples, or with relatively intelligible works of art, such as sculptures, reliefs, and wall paintings.

But, having stated these very clear limitations, both as to what we can expect from the evidence, and as to what this modern observer of it can offer by way of interpretation, what remains truly striking is, on the contrary, the sheer extent and the very explicit character of so much that does in fact survive from Parthian Dura. The evidence for this period, some of it also reflecting the life of small settlements along the Euphrates above and below Dura, includes a large range of material of a very concrete, impressive, and revealing nature.

Dura bore throughout its history the marks of its original establishment as a Hellenistic settlement. The most recent excavations have, however, shown that early Hellenistic occupation was limited to a small area around the citadel; the city plan and the walls belong to the middle of the second century, just before the arrival of the Parthians.[13] The resultant chequer-board pattern of streets, and the circuit of walls fronting the steppe (and, originally, running along the bluff overlooking the river), remained to the end (see map 1). Almost nothing is known of Seleucid Dura, though it is noticeable how a Greek parchment of A.D. 180, thus dating to some fifteen years after the Roman occupation, emphatically reasserts the continuing role of

11. See H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): nos. 154–56.

12. C. B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in P. R. Coleman-Norton, ed., *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of A. C. Johnson* (1951), 251–74.

13. P. Leriche and A. Al-Mahmoud, "Doura-Europos. Bilan des recherches récentes," *CRAI* (1994): 395–420.

the Greek cults of the city, including the priesthood of Seleucus Nicator himself.[14]

There are no inscriptions which are datable to the Seleucid period,[15] though there are—very remarkably—two surviving parchment documents, one of the second century B.C., without a more precise date (*P. Dura*, no. 15), and one fragment of 116 B.C. (*P. Dura*, no. 34), thus dating to very shortly before the Parthian occupation. An even greater silence envelops Dura in the first six or seven decades of Parthian control. In the normal sense of "Hellenistic," the life and culture of *Hellenistic* Dura is almost wholly unknown to us. It should therefore be stressed that the "Parthian" Dura of which we can know something, and on which some of our material, both written and iconographic, throws a lot of light, is that which was contemporary with the first two hundred years of the Roman Empire, from the 30s of the first century B.C. to the 160s A.D.

This fact immediately confronts us with a major problem, in that the main reason why we have some conception of developments in Dura is precisely the same reason why we can follow local developments in so many regions of the Roman Empire, namely the sudden emergence of building projects, and of inscriptions accompanying them. Moreover, it is not just that there is a parallelism between Dura and the now "Roman" Mediterranean world. It is also that the datable inscriptions of Dura begin with a Palmyrene one of 34/3 B.C., recording the construction of a temple of Bel and Yarhibol.[16] It happens to precede by one year the next earliest dated inscription from Dura, a Greek inscription of 33/2 B.C. from the "temple of Artemis/Nanaia."[17]

This pair of inscriptions is significant in many different ways. Firstly, as already mentioned, they inaugurate the inscriptional evidence for building in Dura, which continues to the end of the "Parthian" period, and through the Roman one up till the Persian conquest. Secondly, Greek and Palmyrene are the only two established languages of public inscriptions (and dipinti) in Parthian Dura. As we will see, the traces of Parthian itself are so slight as to be negligible; the other Semitic languages which, as we have also seen, are attested in the Roman period do not appear earlier. Thirdly, the series of Pal-

14. Welles, Fink, and Gilliam (n. 9), *P. Dura*, no. 25 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 46.

15. See Leriche and Al-Mahmoud (n. 13), 403–4.

16. R. Mesnil du Buisson, *Inventaire des inscriptions palmyréniennes de Doura-Europos* (1939), no. 1 = *PAT*, no. 1067. See now the important study by L. Dirven, *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos* (1999).

17. F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Dura-Europos* (1926), 409ff., no. 52; *Report* VI, 411ff., see below.

myrene inscriptions from Dura, which continues into the Roman period, is only one aspect of a range of evidence showing a Palmyrene presence along the various routes across the steppe from the city to the Euphrates and along the river itself.[18] We might be tempted to think of the evidence from Dura written in that variety of Semitic script which is normally labelled as "Palmyrene" as being better described as simply that characteristic of the wide desert zone embracing the Euphrates. But in fact some items unambiguously name Palmyra (TDMWR); and it is better to accept that in a quite significant sense Dura, while part of the Parthian Empire, did also come within the Palmyrene zone of influence. By the early first century A.D. at least, Palmyra itself was clearly within the sphere of Roman control. So it was more than a mere parallel in the pace of urban development which linked Dura to the Mediterranean world of the Roman Empire.

Thirdly, the two inscriptions of the 30s B.C. are very significant in that, like the vast majority of dated documents from Dura, both are dated by the Seleucid era beginning in October 312 B.C. The Palmyrene one dates from (Seleucid) year 279 and the Greek from 280. As was later to be the case with Syriac documents and literary texts, the now defunct Seleucid Empire lived on in Dura through the use of its era. Though the subject of this paper is the culture of "Parthian" Dura rather than its political relationships, it is worth asking briefly how we would in fact know, on the basis of the evidence from the site itself, that Dura actually had indeed been under the Parthian kings. The evidence is in fact quite limited. There are no sculptures, reliefs, or wall paintings representing any of the Parthian monarchs, and there is no trace of any institutions for their cult (by contrast, we have already noted a priest of Seleucus Nicator who was in post in A.D. 180; and we will see later a sculptural representation of him dating from the Parthian period). The only images of these kings from the site are those on the coins found there.[19] These in fact cover the reigns both before and after the period of Parthian rule in Dura (and are accompanied by coins from many other sources), so the numismatic evidence alone might not serve to prove that Dura had been within the Parthian domain. There are at no stage any coins minted by Dura itself, so this (potentially) unambiguous form of recognition of a sovereign is also not present.

Equally, there are in fact no inscriptions from "Parthian" Dura which specifically name any of the Parthian kings. The nearest which the epigraphic material comes to envisaging a wider governmental context of which Dura

18. M. Gawlikowski, "Palmyre et l'Euphrate," *Syria* 60 (1983): 53–68.

19. A. R. Bellinger, ed., *Final Report* VI: *The Coins* (1949).

was a part is a number of mentions of a *stratēgos* and *epistatēs* of the city,[20] stretching from 33/2 B.C. (the earliest Greek inscription; see above) until after the Roman conquest: paradoxically, the latest reference comes from an inscription in Latin which is thought to date to around A.D. 200: *Sept(imium) Lusian str(ategum) Dur(ae)*.[21] It would be very reasonable to see such a person as a royal official rather than as a local one; but the fact that holders are still found in office at the end of the second century must suggest caution.[22] At any rate in no inscribed document from Dura does either the term *basileus* or the name of any Parthian king appear.

That last fact lends a considerable extra importance to the very significant group of ten Greek parchments dating to the period from the 80s to 159/60 A.D.[23] First of all, it should be stressed that these documents, recording various private transactions, are all in Greek, and also provide no parallel to the subscriptions in Nabataean, Aramaic, or Syriac which can be found on Greek documents from the provinces of the Roman Near East.[24] The dating of this series of texts, and their chronological cohesion, serves also to emphasise again that the "Parthian" Dura to which we can make some approach is that which was contemporary with the Roman Empire.

In this context, however, what is important is that here alone reference to the Parthian kings is present and is, moreover, detailed and explicit. A formal correspondence is made between the Parthian royal era, and the Seleucid one (alluded to simply as "formerly"). So, for instance, in the earliest of the group, from A.D. 87, we find the following dating formula: "in the year 334 as the King of Kings reckons, but formerly 398."[25] Two royal officials also appear later in the document, both described as "royal judges and belonging to the first and most-honoured friends and bodyguards" (upper text, line 10; lower text, lines 31–32).

The antichretic loan of A.D. 121, written in the village of Paliga or Phaliga near the confluence of the Chabur and the Euphrates, opens with similar royal titles, and also provides evidence of royal officials: a garrison commander, an *arkapatēs* (ruler of a city), and "a tax collector and *stratēgos* of Mesopotamia and Parapotamia, and *Arabarchē* [ruler of the Arabs]."[26] We do

20. See Arnaud (n. 7), 147, n. 53.

21. *Report* II, 148.

22. *P. Dura* (n. 9), no. 25 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 46, see above; see also *P. Dura*, no. 17.

23. See appendix, section (c) below.

24. See Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11).

25. *P. Dura* (n. 9), no. 18 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 39, upper text.

26. *P. Dura* (n. 9), no. 20 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 166.

not gain any evidence of the relevant administrative or military functions of these officials. But the presence of the Arsacid empire is none the less very evident, as is a penalty in the form of a payment "to the royal treasury" (*to basilikon*, line 21). Like the two probable references to a "royal court" (*basilikon dikastērion*) in the latest of this series of documents, of A.D. 159/60,[27] this allusion coheres with the entire framework presented by the group of ten parchments in making quite explicit the fact that private legal transactions in Dura, while conducted entirely in Greek, functioned within the context of the Parthian royal administration. This administration, however, is itself represented in entirely Greek terms, save only for the single appearance of the transliterated Iranian term, *arkapatēs*, known also at Palmyra.

This accidentally preserved evidence does not allow any conclusions about the real degree of independence enjoyed by Dura, or as to whether this independence increased or decreased with time.[28] It does however strongly confirm the impression provided by the inscriptions of Dura in the Parthian period (whether inscribed, painted, or scratched) that the normal language of the city was Greek. Moreover, since one of the functions of this paper is to point to directions for further research, it might be suggested that this series of ten documents, all written within three-quarters of a century, could be re-studied and re-edited as a group, and would provide uniquely coherent evidence of a legal system functioning in Greek within the Parthian Empire.

We might have expected the presence of one or more Semitic languages in "Parthian" Dura; but, Palmyrene apart, these, as we saw, appear in the surviving evidence only in the Roman period. Or there might have been in the town Parthian-speaking officials, soldiers, traders, or settlers. That possibility can certainly not be ruled out. But the positive evidence for the use of Parthian is almost non-existent, and it is particularly significant that Greek predominates even in the most casual of graffiti.

The fact that Frye and others,[29] collecting up the as yet unpublished inscriptions of Dura, were able to add to their list of 235 inscriptions in Greek and Latin, along with one new Palmyrene one (no. 3 = *PAT*, no. 2831), also two brief and enigmatic Parthian dipinti on sherds (nos. 226–27) gives a fair idea of the balance of the material. So far as language use goes, we have to conclude that the evidence does nothing to suggest that Dura was in any sense a "Parthian" city. However, the extensive documentation in other lan-

27. *P. Dura* (n. 9), no. 24 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 43.

28. Arnaud (n. 7); Dabrowa (n. 7).

29. R. N. Frye, J. F. Gilliam, H. Ingholt, and C. B. Welles, "Inscriptions from Dura-Europos," *YCS* 14 (1955): 127–213.

guages does reveal the use at Dura of a number of Iranian personal names.[30] The more general pattern shown by the nomenclature of Dura in the Parthian period—or which would be shown if there were any parallel to Bradford Welles' invaluable article on the population of *Roman* Dura[31]—is of a complete intermingling of Greek and Semitic names. A study of the names would probably show that office-holders, or benefactors responsible for the construction of temples, tended to have Greek names, and that the rest of the population exhibited a mixture. "Semitic" in this context refers, of course, to the linguistic roots of the names, not to the ethnic origins of their bearers. As I stressed earlier, there is not a single document from Dura in the *Parthian* period which is in any Semitic language other than Palmyrene. The use of Greek, not only in formal inscriptions, or in dipinti identifying figures in frescoes, but also on graffiti on walls or potsherds, strongly suggests, obviously enough, that those persons living in Dura under the Parthians who were literate at all, and who used writing in their ordinary lives, were literate in Greek.

Naturally, these observations can prove nothing about which languages were used in spoken form, and here we must simply confess ignorance. But, to go by the written evidence, Dura remained in a real sense a Greek city. The wider context in which it functioned can be identified on the one hand as the zone of influence of Palmyrene culture, religion, trade, and military activity, and on the other (as we will see more clearly later) as the zone of cultivable land along the Euphrates and Chabur, inhabited by a population which wrote (if it wrote at all) in Greek, but which often used Semitic personal names. The great puzzle, which I do not know even how to begin to answer, is the question of in what sense Dura belonged to the zone of *Mesopotamian* culture, religion, and language. Dura itself of course is *not* literally in Mesopotamia, for it lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, looking across the river to the vast expanse of the central Mesopotamian plain. The zone immediately across the river is one whose culture in the Roman/Parthian period is entirely unknown. It was a journey of some 200 kilometres west-north-west before one reached the small kingdom of Hatra, which has revealed a long series of Aramaic inscriptions of the second century A.D. (but not before); or of some 250 kilometres, as the crow flies, before one reached (by travelling up the Euphrates and then either the Chabur or—as was evidently a normal route—the Balikh) the cities of the north Mesopotamian

30. Ph. Huyse, "Zum iranischen Namengut in Dura-Europos," *Anz. Öst. Akad. Wiss., Wien* 125 (1988): 19–32.

31. Welles (n. 12).

shelf: Edessa, Carrhae, Rhesaena, Nisibis, Singara. It was this area into which Roman forces advanced at about the same time as they occupied Dura in the 160s, and which was to be made Roman provincial territory in the 190s by Septimius Severus. We know that Greek was in use here, but also that Syriac (a dialect of Aramaic) developed here as a written language in a distinctive script with its own literature. Once again, we have clear evidence from the Roman period of connections between this Syriac-speaking zone and Dura.[32] But from the Parthian period there is silence.

If we were searching for sources of external influence on the culture of Dura, a more promising direction would be to look south-eastwards, some 500 kilometres down the Euphrates to Babylon, or a little less to Ctesiphon and Seleucia on the Tigris. For it is well known, firstly, that the Palmyrene presence was felt not only in Dura but further south-eastwards along the river towards this ancient centre of civilisation.[33] It should be stressed that we do know that an Akkadian culture still existed in Babylonia; cuneiform writing remained in use at least until towards the end of the first century A.D. This area is relevant not merely because it is beyond question that there was a trade route which ran along the river, but because both Cumont and Rostovtzeff from the beginning saw Dura as promising to reveal the culture of a *Mesopotamian* city—which, literally speaking, it was not.[34] There was however a sense in which "Parthian" Dura, lying on the river, did indeed belong to "Mesopotamia," for the parchment of A.D. 121 (text to n. 26 above) mentions a *paralēptēs* (tax collector) and *stratēgos* of Mesopotamia and Parapotamia, and *Arabarchē*. The document was written at P(h)aliga, near the confluence of the Chabur and the Euphrates, but found at Dura. A much more profound question is whether the excavations have revealed anything to justify the presupposition on the part of Rostovtzeff and Cumont that the local culture of Dura was in any significant sense "Mesopotamian."

If there is, it lies in the nature of the cult centres or temples which were constructed in the Parthian period, from the late first century B.C. to the middle of the second century A.D. It is very suggestive that one of the few major studies of any aspect of Parthian Dura is Susan B. Downey's book on "Mesopotamian" religious architecture from Alexander to the Parthian

32. See esp. *P. Dura* (n. 9), no. 28 = Cotton, Cockle, and Millar (n. 11), no. 100, a Syriac parchment of A.D. 243 found in Dura; now reprinted as P1 in appendix I of H. J. W. Drijvers and J. F. Healey, *The Old-Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene* (1999); cf. F. Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337* (1993), chap. 12.

33. Gawlikowski (n. 18).

34. Millar (n. 4).

period.[35] The book includes a section on Aï Khanum in Afghanistan, as well as two sections on sites in Iran, not to speak of its detailed treatment of Dura itself. So questions of definition become crucial. How are we to define or identify those types of cult building of the Parthian period which come from the vast zone traversed and colonised by Alexander, and which are not temples in "Greek" style, with a pillared *pronaos* surmounted by a pediment, and an oblong *cella* surrounded by columns? This much at least is clear: that though Dura was a Hellenistic *apoikia* (settlement), and remained Greek-speaking, the excavations there have so far revealed no examples of the standard Greek temple. There is therefore a real question about the origins and nature of the types of cult building which have been found there.

These public, or communal, buildings will form the main focus of what follows, not least because they raise in acute form the questions both of how the deities worshipped in them were identified and of what constitutes "a temple" as a distinct architectural entity. Both questions depend very largely on inscriptions, mainly in Greek, but in a couple of cases also in Palmyrene. When an inscription names a god, under what conditions are we entitled to identify the context in which it was found as "a temple of" that god? And where (as they frequently do) inscriptions record explicitly the structures or architectural elements which a donor, or group of donors, has put up, how certain can we be as to which structures are referred to by the Greek (or Palmyrene) terms used? The relationship of epigraphy to the building history of Dura is one of the main reasons why a complete revision of the inscriptions, as of the whole archaeological record, is really required before we can be sure of what we really know of the city under the Parthians. So, equally, is the question of what terms are in fact used of the gods concerned. Who, for instance, would guess that the temple now identified as that "of Bel" (or formerly "of the Palmyrene gods") owes its identity to the discovery there of Greek graffiti and an inscription which names "Zeus," "Zeus Megistos" ("the greatest Zeus") or "Zeus Sōtēr" ("Zeus the Saviour")? (See below.)

The brief notes which follow are of course no substitute for such a fundamental revision, and cannot deal with all the possible cases. Those that seem most worth-while to discuss will be considered briefly in chronological order, that is to say, in the sequence suggested by those dated inscriptions which refer to them. Therefore, except in those cases where the inscription makes it unambiguously clear that what is involved is the construction of an entirely new temple, the dates are not necessarily those of the creation of the temple; very often indeed, as will be seen, the inscriptions are either dedica-

35. S. B. Downey, *Mesopotamian Religious Architecture: Alexander through the Parthians* (1988).

tory, with no explicit mention of what was being dedicated, or make clear that they record the construction or dedication of a specific architectural element within a larger setting. Moreover, even where a temple is described unambiguously as new, it does not follow that the deity mentioned had not been worshipped in Dura already, either on the same site or elsewhere.

Throughout, the inscriptions raise two persistent problems. Does a dedication to a particular deity imply that the whole cult site is to be interpreted as "the temple of" that deity? Secondly, how are we to identify the various architectural elements recorded in the inscriptions, and which of them (again) are evidence for the existence of "the temple of" a particular deity? It must be stressed that, inevitably, it was the discovery of religious inscriptions which provided the excavators with labels for the buildings excavated at Dura. But there is unfortunately no simple or obvious deduction from the discovery of an inscription naming a deity to the identification of an entire excavated complex as that deity's temple. This question cannot properly be pursued here in detail, even with the aid of reproduced plans of all the sites.[36] For precisely what would have to be at stake in any serious review of the excavations, and the notes and field reports on them, would be how these plans and identifications were arrived at. They cannot simply be taken as a datum.

However, even a sketch based fundamentally on inscriptions, and using the powerful religious iconography of Parthian Dura whenever possible, will provide a partial insight into the culture and society of the city, and into the huge problems which remain to be investigated.

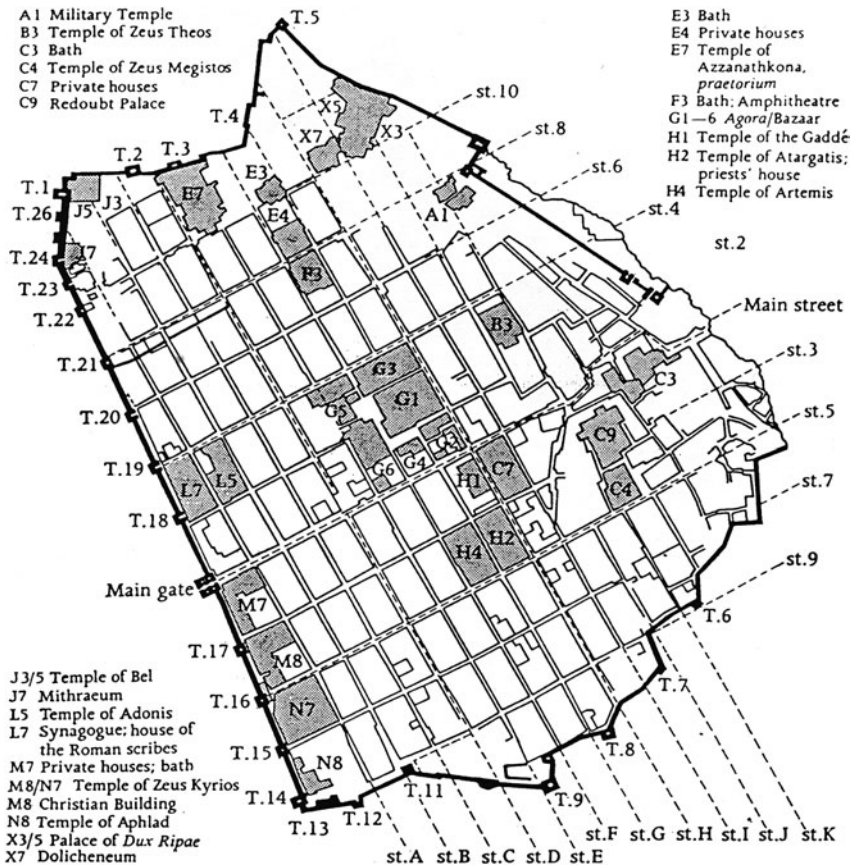
The religious history of Parthian Dura begins with the Necropolis Temple, situated some 350 metres outside the wall, and with the earliest dated inscription from Dura, the Palmyrene text of Seleucid year 279 (34/3 B.C.), mentioned above, recording the construction of a temple to Bel and Yarhibol (HYKL' LBL WYRHBWL).[37] The god "Bēlos" is also mentioned in two Greek inscriptions from the same site.[38] Since the so-called temple of Bel in the city has played such a large part in modern conceptions, it ought to be stressed that these are the only references to Bel (a Babylonian deity who was also the god of the main temple at Palmyra) from Dura.

From the city itself we know of the following temples which are attested from the Parthian period. The numbers relate to the plan of the city presented in map 1.

36. As in Downey (n. 35).

37. Mesnil du Buisson (n. 16), no. 1 = *PAT*, no. 1067.

38. *Report* VII/VIII, 320, nos. 917–18.



Map 1. Plan of Dura, with location of excavated areas.

1. The "Temple of Artemis" (or "Artemis-Nanaia") (H4). A column at the entrance to the *pronaos* bears an inscription with the Seleucid year 280 (33/2 B.C.), naming one Seleucus as *stratēgos polēos genearchēs* (general of the army and [?] ruler of the tribes).[39] The earliest reference to a deity of this temple, however, is an inscription of A.D. 2/3, in which a man with a Semitic name, Abidnēriglos Zabidilaiou (Servant of Nergal[?], son of Zabidilaios), erected something unspecified "to Artemis and Apollo the *archēgoi* [founders]."[40] Strictly speaking, we still have no mention of a temple "of" these deities. Nor do we in the inscription of A.D. 33/4, recording the

39. Cumont (n. 17), 409, no. 52; *Report* VI, 411, see above.

40. *Report* III, 63, no. 161 = *SEG* VII, no. 352.

construction of the *oikodomē* and the *psalides* (building and arches?),[41] or "the *oikodomē* and the *thyrōmata* [gates]," referred to in A.D. 91/2.[42] Artemis is however recorded from the same site also on inscriptions of the *Roman* period. Nanaia, however, owes her place here, and her possible identification with Artemis, to a single undated graffito, in which we have on the first line the Greek letters: *ΠΙ(=Μ)ΑΘΘΑΝΑΩΝΑΝΑΙΑΑΔΑΔ*, no doubt identifying Nanaia and Hadad.[43] The question of what determines the identity of "the" god, or gods, "of" a temple is clearly a real problem here, as it is elsewhere.

What is clear at least is that the first half of the first century was a flourishing one for the "epigraphic habit" at Dura, and the inscriptions reveal a whole series of deities, and perhaps of temples, attested within a few years.

2. The "Temple of Zeus Kyrios" (M8/N7). It is paradoxical that in this case, where a formal correspondence between the Greek and the Semitic name of the deity is provided by the evidence (instead of being a hypothesis), the temple goes under the Greek name of its god, Zeus Kyrios, only, and not also under its Palmyrene one, Baalshamin. An inscription from above the altar gives the date A.D. 28/9, with no further information. But a bilingual Greek and Palmyrene one, dated to A.D. 31/2, and placed under a bas-relief of the deity, who is seated on a chair (see fig. 1), with the dedicant, identified as Seleucus, standing beside him, records that an image (MṢB'/*andrias*) had been dedicated to "Baalshamin the god" (B'L ŠMYN 'LH') and to Zeus Kyrios ("Zeus the Lord").[44] The bas-relief was placed on the wall above an altar. There is no documentary evidence for how the architectural setting in which the bas-relief was placed would have been described or identified.

3. The "Temple of Azzanathkona" (E7). The structural development of the site is not easy to follow. But an inscription of A.D. 33/4 records that something unspecified was dedicated to Azzanathkona, on behalf of himself and his children, by one Rechimnaios.[45] The substantial list of Greek (and later Latin) inscriptions from this context includes no others which name the deity until we reach one of A.D. 161/2, recording that Zabidkonos son of Rhaeibelos "erected a chamber in the temple (?) to the goddess Artemis, called Azzanathkona."[46] The temple, or cult site, evidently pre-existed the dedication mentioned above, for the earliest of the long series of inscriptions

41. *Report* III, no. 152 = *SEG* VII, no. 353.
42. *Report* III, no. 157 = *SEG* VII, no. 357.
43. Cumont (n. 17), 411, no. 55 = *SEG* VII, no. 336.
44. *Report* VII/VIII, 307, no. 915c; Mesnil du Buisson, no. 23 = *PAT*, no. 1089.
45. *Report* V, 177, no. 504.
46. *Report* V, 142, no. 453.

Fig. 1. Relief of Zeus Kyrios / Baalshamin.
Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection.

on the steps dates to A.D. 12/13.[47] There is no other evidence identifying the structure as a temple.

4. The "Temple of Atargatis" (H2). From about the same moment we have inscriptions from the area which lies next to the "temple of Artemis," and which was taken by Cumont to be part of it,[48] but which was subsequently identified as a separate temple.[49] The earliest inscription from the site dates to A.D. 31/2[50] and records the erection of something unspecified, with no divine name given. Three years later, the same man, Ammonios, dedicated *phalloi*,[51] and two years later again a group of persons dedicated a *topos* (place), not further defined, to "the goddess" (*thea*).[52] The name "Atargatis," by which the temple is now identified, is in fact attested first by an inscription from this site which is dated to A.D. 92/3, and which records the erection of an *oikos* (house), with a *tamieion* (treasury) inside it, for the "good order [*eukosmia*] of the Atargateian temple" [*sic*].[53] There are also inscriptions of the Roman period from the site referring to Atargatis.[54] Taken together, the evidence, especially that mentioning the temple (*hieron*) of the goddess, makes the identification secure. None the less, it should be noted that from the same temple there is a dedication to the unknown god *theos Sasados*,[55] and another, from the Roman period, to *theos Saddoudan*,[56] as well as a Greek-Palmyrene bilingual inscription dedicated to *theos Helios* / "Shamash the god" (ŠMŠ 'LH').[57] It can thus be taken as certain that dedications to more than one deity could be erected in the same temple or cult centre. The relevance of this fact to the identification of temples on the basis of inscriptions is obvious.

5. The Temple of Aphlad (N8). In the south-west corner of the city, in an irregular set of rooms clustering around a courtyard, there was found an inscribed slab from the Seleucid year 365, A.D. 54/5, recording that the members of a *hetaireia* had erected an *andrōn* (chamber?) to "Apalados the god" for the safety of the *stratēgos* Seleukos.[58] By good fortune, the name of one of

47. *Report* V, 196, no. 545.
48. Cumont (n. 17), 169.
49. *Report* III, 9ff.
50. Cumont (n. 17), 427, no. 85.
51. Frye et al. (n. 29), 129, no. 1.
52. Frye et al. (n. 29), 129, no. 2.
53. *Report* III, 61, no. 159 = *SEG* VII, no. 358.
54. *Report* III, 43ff., nos. 145–46 = *SEG* VII, nos. 334–35.
55. *Report* III, 59, no. 158 = *SEG* VII, no. 358.
56. *Report* III, 62, no. 160 = *SEG* VII, no. 343.
57. Frye et al. (n. 29), 131, no. 3 = *PAT*, no. 2831.
58. *Report* V, 113, no. 418.

Fig. 2. Relief of Aphlad. National Museum, Damascus.

the dedicants, Adadiabos son of Zabdibolos, occurs also on the inscribed relief (see fig. 2) which was found along with the inscribed slab, and which represents the god himself, here called "Aphlad."[59] The two texts must be at least approximately contemporary, and the inscribed relief might well be regarded as the single most revealing product of Parthian Dura. For the god is identified as "of Anath [the] village of [the] Euphrates," in other words as coming from Ana, which lies more than 100 kilometres down the river from Dura. Like P(h)aliga, which lies in the opposite direction (text following n. 34 above), Ana(th) and other Greek-using villages scattered along the river give a real sense to the notion of a "Parapotamia" (above). The heavily clad god is represented standing on two eagle-griffins, with a priest in a conical hat standing beside him. The iconography of the relief will not be discussed here, but it can be stressed that, in this case at least, we seem to be at the moment of the foundation (*apheidrusis*) of the sanctuary—"this foundation [dedication?] of [the] temple of Aphlad called god of the village of Anath of [the] Euphrates."

6. The Temple of Zeus ("temple of the Palmyrene gods" or "temple of Bel"). This temple, situated in the north-west corner of the city (J3/5), provides the most extraordinary example of the confusions about identification which mark the reports of the excavations. It is also of great importance, for it is this structure which contains the famous frescoes of sacrifice by someone identified as Konon and by the Roman tribune Iulius Terentius. These wall paintings and their painted inscriptions (which also identify the images of the Tyche of Palmyra and of Dura itself) will not be discussed further here.

Neither of the two successive conventional names ("temple of the Palmyrene gods" and "temple of Bel") used for it since the 1920s has any support in the evidence. On the contrary, there is as good evidence here as anywhere else for the identification of its god, namely that it was Zeus. A dedication of A.D. 51/2 from here is addressed to Zeus Sōtēr.[60] More important, another inscription, of A.D. 114/15, records that Lysias son of Konon had dedicated "this *oikos* [house] and the *hyperōion* [upper storey]" out of reverence for Zeus.[61] After an earthquake in A.D. 160 the city itself also set up a dedication here to "[the] Greatest Zeus" (*megistos Zeus*).[62] There are also undated *graffiti* naming "Zeus" or "Zeus Megistos";[63] but the fact that another temple (located at C4)

59. *Report* V, 106ff., no. 416, pl. XIII.

60. *Report* II, 91, no. 4; *SEG* VII, no. 361.

61. Cumont (n. 17), 355, no. 1.

62. *Report* II, 86, no. 2 = *SEG* VII, no. 360.

63. Cumont (n. 17), 387, no. 25.

was identified by the excavators as that of *Zeus Megistos* ought to make us hesitate as to how consistently these divine appellations were in fact used in Dura. But if the temple in the north-west corner of the city is to be labelled at all, it should be as that of Zeus. There is no attestation of the divine name "Bel" from the temple.

7. The Temple of Zeus Theos (B3). Before the end of the Parthian period there was to be a third temple of Zeus in Dura. For an inscription of A.D. 120/1 records in very formal style that Seleukos son of Theomnestos son of Antiochos, a "*Eurōpaios* and belonging to the *prōtoi* [leading men]," had erected to Zeus Theos the temple (*naos*), the gates (*thyrōmata*) and "the painting of the images."[64] We can never be certain that *naos* does not refer to a shrine rather than a whole temple; but the text unmistakably claims to record a significant innovation. None the less, an altar inscribed with the name of Zeus, and dated to A.D. 113/14, was found on the same site,[65] so a cult of Zeus was already practised there.

8. The Temple of Adonis (L5). If one follows through the cult inscriptions of Parthian Dura in chronological order, there does seem to be an unmistakable tendency in the last few decades of Parthian rule for the texts to become more explicit and expansive. This is clearly the case with the temple of Adonis located near the western wall, where a series of quite informative inscriptions begins in A.D. 152, and continues into the first two decades of the Roman period.[66] To add a typical note of confusion, however, the earliest of them (no. 870), very fragmentary, seems to refer to Atargatis, rather than Adonis, and the second (no. 871), recording the erection of an *oikos* (house) in A.D. 153 by eight men with transliterated Semitic names, identifies no deity; nor does 872, of A.D. 157/8, put up by the son of a high priest (*archiereus*) to record his erection of a *plintheion* (meaning uncertain). Adonis is in fact named only in two inscriptions of the early Roman period: no. 873, of A.D. 175, recording the erection of an altar, and no. 875, of A.D. 181/2, recording the building of a peristyle and *oinochyteion* (wine cellar?) for the worship of Adonis. Whether the cult of Adonis originated in *Parthian* Dura must therefore be open to question.

9. The "Temple of the Gaddé" (H1). No such problem affects the identification of the last cult place to be considered, the so-called temple of the Gaddé in the centre of the city.[67] Here the story of the known temples of

64. *Report* VII/VIII, 214, no. 888.

65. *Report* VII/VIII, 213, no. 887.

66. *Report* VII/VIII, 167ff., nos. 870–75.

67. *Report* VII/VIII, 218ff.

Parthian Dura ends as it began, with a strong Palmyrene influence. The most striking aspect of that influence is represented by the two carved reliefs of A.D. 159 which represent respectively the Fortune (Gad) of Dura and that of Palmyra (see figs. 3 and 4). The reliefs are illustrated by Greek and Palmyrene texts, which are deployed in combination to produce as explicit an identification of all the figures as possible: Hairanes, the dedicator; the Gad of each city; and Seleucus Nicator (SLWKWS NYQṬWR). Only the Nike who is shown crowning the Gad of Palmyra on the second relief (fig. 4) is not explicitly labelled. It should be stressed, however, that the formally cut inscriptions intended as functional elements to accompany the reliefs are all in Palmyrene. Greek comes in only in the form of a dipinto added on the top of each relief, identifying the dedicator.

It may be useful to lay out as clearly as possible the disposition of the Greek dipinti and the Palmyrene texts (transliterated) attached to each of the reliefs. The first relief (fig. 3 and table 1) is labelled with:

(a) Dipinto above head of dedicator: "Aira[nē]s [M]ali[chou]" (*Report* VII/VIII, 275, no. 903)
(b) Carved Palmyrene inscriptions below figures (*Report* VII/VIII, no. 907 = *PAT*, nos. 1094–96)

The second relief (fig. 4 and table 2) is labelled with:

(a) Dipinto near head of dedicator: "Let [Hai]ranes son of Malichos son of [Nasor] be remembered" (*Report* VII/VIII, no. 902)
(b) Carved Palmyrene inscriptions below figures (*Report* VII/VIII, no. 908 = *PAT* nos. 1097–98)

It must remain not wholly certain, however, whether these two reliefs representing the personified *Tychai* of Palmyra and Dura are sufficient to demonstrate that the architectural setting in which they were found is a temple, and specifically a temple of these deities. It should be recalled that the same two personifications, duly labelled in Greek, are also represented on the famous wall fresco of the Roman period from the temple which should be labelled as that of Zeus (no. 6 above), representing a sacrifice conducted by the *tribunus* Iulius Terentius.[68]

As always, therefore, the details of the excavation record, the considerations which led to the identification of particular remains as belonging to distinct buildings, and the relation of the inscriptions to their physical envi-

68. For the painted inscriptions, see Cumont (n. 17), 363, no. 8c.

Fig. 3. Relief of Gad of Dura. Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection.

Table 1. Relief of Gad of Dura

Left	Centre	Right
ṢLM ḤYRN BR MLKW BR NṢWR	GD' DY DWR' 'BD ḤYRN BR MLKW BR NṢWR BYRḤ NYSN ŠNT 470	SLWKWS NYQṬWR
Image of Hairan son of Maliku son of Nasor	Gad of Dura, made Hairan son of Maliku son of Nasor in the month Nisan, year 470	Seleukos Nikator

ronment—and, in a different sense, to their wider social and religious context—all require to be radically re-examined. All that I have tried to do in this paper is to take a very narrow selection from a vast range of evidence of all kinds, and to suggest what contribution the inscriptions in Greek and Palmyrene which are dated, and which refer to cults, divine images, and cult buildings, could make to our understanding of the history of Parthian Dura.

As I suggested earlier, one alternative avenue of research would be to take as evidence the Greek documents written on parchment in the last eight

Fig. 4. Relief of Gad of Palmyra. Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection.

Table 2. Relief of Gad of Palmyra

Left	Centre	Right
(Missing)	GD' DY TDMWR 'BD ḤY[RN] BR MLKW BR NṢWR	BYRḤ NYSN ŠNT 470
	Gad of Tadmor, which Hairan son of Maliku, son of Nasor made	In the month Nisan, year 470

decades of Parthian rule, and to consider them from a variety of points of view, from the history of script and language to that of law and social history. Much more complex and difficult would be the task of re-assessing all the inscriptions, and producing a corpus of them. But that very process would, as always, run the danger of divorcing this verbal material from the physical and monumental contexts to which it belongs. It would be in many ways a yet

more difficult task to re-examine those contexts, and to ask what part the inscriptions played in forming the proposed identifications of buildings in the city. The genius and energy of Cumont and Rostovtzeff initiated and carried through these uniquely productive excavations. But these same qualities led to over-ambitious and over-hasty interpretations of the results. It would not be a betrayal of their heritage, but a tribute to it, if the entire story—of the excavations and of Dura itself—were to be re-examined.

Appendix

1. *Parthian Dura: Selected Evidence* (*material incorporating writing*)

(a) General

F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (Paris, 1926):

29ff., Le temple "des dieux palmyréniens" et ses peintures (355ff., inscriptions 1–49)
169ff., Le temple d'Artémis et ses sculptures (404ff., inscriptions 50–133)
450, ins. 134 (Greek inscription of A.D. 175/6 with Parthian titles)

P. V. C. Baur and M. I. Rostovtzeff, eds., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters, Preliminary Reports* (New Haven and Oxford, 1929–):

First Season (Spring 1928) (1929)
30ff., The Greek and Latin Inscriptions.
61ff., Two Palmyrene inscriptions.

Second Season (1928/9) (1931):
86, ins. 2 "temple of Palmyrene gods" (A.D. 160)
91, ins. 4 "temple of Palmyrene gods" (A.D. 51)
164ff., Konon family

Third Season (1929/30) (1932)
4ff., The Temple of Artemis
9ff., The Temple of Atargatis
40ff., ins. nos. 144, 147, 148?, 151–53, 157–59, 161 (A.D. 2), 162

Fifth Season (1931/2) (1934)
98ff., Temple of Aphlad (pl. XIII)
112ff., ins. 416–47

131ff., Temple of Azzanathkona
139ff., ins. 449–80
177ff., ins. 504–55

Sixth Season (1932/3) (1936)
397ff., Temple of Artemis-Nanaia
411ff., ins. (Cumont, no. 52), 33/32 B.C.; 802–4

Seventh and Eighth Seasons (1933/4 and 1934/5) (1939)
23ff., Fortifications, Parthian period
128ff., ins. 867–69 (A.D. 86/7, 116/17, 118/19) from site of (later) Mithraeum
135ff., Temple of Adonis
167f., ins. 870 (A.D. 152), 871 (A.D. 153), 872 (A.D. 157/8), (873, A.D. 175; 875, A.D. 181/2)

180ff., Temple of Zeus Theos
212ff., ins. 886–900 (A.D. 113/14–120/21)

218ff., Temple of Gaddé
258ff., Reliefs of Gad of Dura (pl. XXXIII); Gad of Palmyra (pl. XXXIV); Iarhibol (pl. XXXV.2) = figures 3 and 4 above
275ff., ins. 901–3 (Greek); 907–8 (A.D. 159), 909–13 (Palmyrene)

284ff., Temple of Zeus Kyrios
307ff., ins. 914 (A.D. 28/9); 915 (A.D. 31/2, Greek-Palmyrene)

310ff., Necropolis Temple
318f., ins. 916 (34/3 B.C., Palmyrene); 917–18 (Greek)

Ninth Season (1935/6), pts. I–III (1952)
S. B. Matheson, "The Tenth Season at Dura-Europos, 1936–1937," *Syria* 69 (1992): 121–40.

(b) Inscriptions

See also (a) above

SEG II, nos. 754–824; VII, nos. 332–801 (*SEG* did not collect the inscriptions from Dura after *Report* IV of 1930/1).
R. Mesnil du Buisson, *Inventaire des inscriptions palmyréniennes de Doura-Europos* (1939), esp. nos. 1 (34/3 B.C.), 23 (A.D. 31/2), 28–32 (A.D. 159).
R. N. Frye, J. F. Gilliam, H. Ingholt, and C. B. Welles, "Inscriptions from Dura-Europos," *YCS* 14 (1955): 127–213. Note esp. ins. 1 (temple of

Atargatis, A.D. 34/5); 2 (A.D. 37); 3 (Greek/Palmyrene); 226–27 (Parthian dipinti).

J. Teixidor, "Parthian Officials in Lower Mesopotamia," *Mesopotamia* 22 (1987): 187–93.

D. Hillers and E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (1996), nos. 1067ff.; 2831.

(c) Greek Documents written on Parchment

C. B. Welles, R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam, *Dura Final Report* V.1: *The Parchments and Papyri* (New Haven, 1959).

H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214–35.

P. Dura number	Cotton, Cockle, and Millar, survey number	Content
18	39	Deed of gift. A.D. 87
19	40	Mutual distribution. A.D. 88/9. See C. Saliou, "Les quatre fils de Polémocratès (*P. Dura* 19): texte et archéologie," *Syria* 69 (1992): 65–100.
13	36	Application by tax farmer. Late first century A.D.
16	38	Registry roll. Late first century.
14	37	Report of litigation? First/second century.
20	166	Antichretic loan. A.D. 121. Written in P(h)aliga.
21	41	Antichretic loan. First half of second century.
22	42	Loan on security. A.D. 133/4.
23	35	Antichretic loan. A.D. 134. Written in Ossa.
24	43	Acknowledgement of debt. A.D. 159/60.
25	46	Deed of sale. A.D. 180. Institutions of Dura.

(d) Coins

A. R. Bellinger, ed., *Final Report* VI: *The Coins* (1949), nos. 113–56: Coins of Parthian kings from Mithridates I (171–138 B.C.) to Vologases V (A.D. 207–22).

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and Christianity, A.D. 312–438[*]

Introduction: Aurelius Samohil

In the year 383 in Catania in Sicily a Jew named Aurelius Samohil bought a tomb in which to lay the remains of himself and his wife, and recorded the fact for posterity in an inscription in Latin, with an introductory line in Hebrew, while adorning the stone with two incised representations of menorahs. The text, written in a rough approximation to Latin, runs as follows:

> Shalom to Israel, amen, amen; Shalom Shmuel [in Hebrew], I, Aurelius Samohil have bought [this] tomb [*memoria*] for myself and my wife Lasiferina, who died on the 12th day before the Kalends of November, on Friday [*diae Veneris*], on the eighth day of the month, in the consulship of Merobaudes for the second time and of Saturnus. She lived 22 years in peace. I adjure you by the *honores* of the *patriarchae*, and similarly adjure you by the Law (or the Light—*licem*) which the Lord gave to the Jews, that no-one should open the tomb and put in another body over our bones. But if anyone were to open it let him give 10 pounds of silver to the *fiscus* (the imperial treasury).[1]

[*] First published in J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak, eds., *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London, 1992), 97–123.

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1. J.-B. Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum* I, ed. B. Lifshitz (1975), no. 650; *AE* (1984), no. 439; D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe* I (1993), no. 145. Given the importance of the epigraphic evidence from the diaspora, note the publication in 2004 of the three vol-

The inscription is perhaps even more remarkable than it may appear at first sight; and it also raises more problems than are immediately apparent. What is clear is that Aurelius Samohil proclaims himself unambiguously as a Jew, with a proud attachment to Jewish religious tradition. When he records that the Lord (*dominus*) gave *licem* to the Jews, he almost certainly means the Law (*lex*), though he might have meant "the light" (*lux*). What is clear at any rate is that he is living by a combination of a secular dating system and calendar and a Jewish one. "Friday" is expressed as *di(a)e Veneris*, "the day of Venus," the term which would evolve into *venerdi/vendredi*. But the month referred to must be Mareshvan. It cannot be certain that he knew Hebrew himself; but at the very least he was in a position to have some appropriate Hebrew words inscribed.

Who are the *patriarchae* to whose *honores* he refers? He may well mean the biblical patriarchs. But the inscription might alternatively be evidence of the extension to Sicily of the influence of the contemporary Jewish patriarchs in Palestine, to whom imperial legal pronouncements (see text to n. 93 below) first refer in 392 as *clarissimi et illustres* (most renowned and illustrious) *Patriarchae*.[2] If Aurelius Samohil is referring to them, that in its turn raises the much wider question of the nature of diaspora Judaism in the late Roman period. Are we to think of a relatively integrated and homogeneous Jewish world, in which all or most of the communities in the provinces of the Roman Empire observed a Judaism closely resembling that "rabbinic" Judaism of Palestine, which was just giving birth to the "Palestinian" or "Jerusalem" Talmud—or which the Talmud presents to us as "the" Judaism of late Roman Palestine? And if so, was this integration achieved by active contacts and supervision from Palestine? There is in fact one item of Roman legal evidence, an instruction sent in 399 by Arcadius and Honorius to (Valerius) Messalla, praetorian prefect of Italy and Africa, which implies that the *Patriarcha* was sending emissaries (*apostoli*) to collect money in this area, that is to say the Latin-speaking West.[3] How far such *apostoli* exercised any religious authority or influence is of course a more complex question.

But the Roman legal evidence also raises another possibility: for it shows that among the numerous and varied Greek terms used to designate the officials of individual Jewish diaspora communities, the term *patriarcha* also fig-

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umes of *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* I: *Eastern Europe*, ed. D. Noy, A. Panyatov, and A. Bloedhorn; II: *Kleinasien*, ed. W. Ameling; III: *Syria and Cyprus*, ed. D. Noy and H. Bloedhorn. The corpus is abbreviated as *IJudO*; cross-references are entered below.

2. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 8 = A. Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (1987), no. 20.

3. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 14 = Linder (n. 2), no. 30.

ured.[4] So Aurelius Samohil may simply have been referring to such local Jewish officials.

The most remarkable fact about the inscription is, however, that it is both one of the longest Hebrew texts and the longest Latin documentary text known from the Jewish diaspora of this period. It is beyond question that the best-attested language of the diaspora Jewish communities is Greek, and we need not doubt that the Bible in Greek translation was very commonly used in the synagogues of the diaspora,[5] just as it could be even in the Greek-speaking communities of Palestine itself.[6] That does not prove that the Hebrew Bible was unknown in the diaspora (for biblical scrolls in Hebrew in use in Rome in the 380s, see below); nor does it prove that Hebrew or Aramaic was nowhere spoken or used. At least for the Greek provinces, the publication of a *ketubba* written in Aramaic in Antinoopolis in Egypt, and securely dated to A.D. 417, must completely re-open the question of the use of Semitic languages in the diaspora; and perhaps all the more so because it contains such a high proportion of transliterated Greek, implying the use in the text of the language of daily life.[7]

Aurelius Samohil could at any rate have a line of commonplace expressions inscribed in Hebrew. But the fact that he could express himself as an observant Jew in Latin is far more significant. As we will see, there is very clear evidence for the existence of Jewish communities in many parts of the Latin-speaking West in this period, from Africa to Italy, Spain, and Gaul. Though they may well have begun typically as immigrant communities of Greek-speakers, it is very likely that by now many of their members used Latin in ordinary life. The story of the conversion of the Jewish community of Minorca in 417 (see text to n. 104 below and following it) clearly presupposes the use of Latin equally by the Jews and by the surrounding Christians. But what of the Bible itself? The Christians seem to have had Latin translations of books of the Bible since the second century. Might the synagogue service ever have been conducted in Latin? And what of religious disputation, teaching, or writing? Augustine's story of Jewish opinions being asked on a point of biblical interpretation at Oea in North Africa seems to imply the use of Latin at least to discuss the text (see text to n. 79 below). But

4. E.g., *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 1–2 = Linder (n. 2), nos. 8–9, A.D. 329–30; 16, 8, 13 = Linder (n. 2), no. 27, A.D. 397.

5. V. Colorni, "L'uso del greco nella liturgia del giudaismo hellenistico e la Novella 146 di Giustiniano," *Annali di Storia del Diritto* 8 (1964): 19.

6. Jerusalem Talmud, *Sota* 7.21b; Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 142.

7. C. Sirat, P. Caudelier, M. Dukan, and M. A. Friedman, *La Ketouba de Cologne: un contrat de marriage juif à Antinoopolis* (1986).

whether there was a Jewish Bible in Latin remains wholly uncertain.[8] The social, intellectual, and religious history of the Jews in the Latin-speaking environment of the western half of the later Roman Empire remains a largely unexplored field. Fortunately we have some evidence, however scattered, which allows rather more direct access to the Judaism of the diaspora in the Greek-speaking part of the Empire.

The Diaspora in a Greek Environment

The diaspora of the eastern part of the Empire has certainly left far fuller evidence, both documentary and archaeological, than is available for the West; and some of this evidence needs to be set out, to establish a framework, before we look at the much more complex issue of the relations between religious groups. But as it happens, some, though not all, of the archaeological evidence itself also illustrates with the greatest clarity the effects of religious conflict, above all in the fifth century.

We may begin with the well-known synagogue at Stobi in ancient Macedonia. A substantial inscription of the late second or early third century records that a private house was made over to the Jewish community and converted for use as a synagogue. If the conditions of its use were broken, a very large fine was to be paid to the *patriarchēs*: this was surely not the *Nasi* or *Ethnarchēs*, far away in Palestine (the forerunner of the fourth-century *Patriarcha*), whose rise to power had hardly begun.[9] More probably, legal evidence suggests (see text to n. 4 above), this will have been a local official. Later the synagogue was replaced by a more elaborate one. But before the end of the fourth century this synagogue was to be destroyed, and replaced by a Christian basilica built directly on the site.[10]

A very similar story is revealed by the Belgian excavations at the great city of Apamea in Syria. For near the centre of the city, not far from the famous Great Colonnade which runs north-south, and some 120 metres south of the main east-west street, the excavators discovered the mosaic floor of a late fourth-century synagogue, with nineteen mosaic inscriptions recording the names of those who paid for the laying of the mosaic in and around the year 391.[11] The mosaics are strictly geometric and non-representational;

8. Colorni (n. 5), 73ff.

9. M. D. Goodman, *State and Subject in Roman Galilee, A.D. 135–212* (1983), 111ff.

10. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 67–68. See *IJudO* I, 56ff., no. Mac1.

11. J. C. Balty, *Guide d'Apamée* (1981), 139ff.; Janine Balty, *Mosaïques d'Apamée* (1986), 6ff. See now *IJudO* III, 84ff., nos. Syr53–71.

the inscriptions, all in Greek, show a number of Hebrew names in transliteration: "Nemeas" (Nehemiah), "Phineas," "Eisakios," "Saoulos." They also illustrate the complexity of office-holding within diaspora communities, revealing *archisynagōgoi*, *gerousiarchoi*, *presbyteroi*, and a man described as *(h)azzan* or *diakonos*. One of the donors was Ilasios son of Eisakios, "*archisynagōgos* of the Antiochenes"—the Jewish community of Antioch to the north, of which more later (see text to n. 84 below). It would be difficult to find better evidence of a Jewish community established at the heart of the a Greek city—except that, once again, a Christian church was built exactly on the site of the synagogue in the fifth century, to be enlarged and adorned in the sixth.[12]

A very similar progression is visible at Gerasa in Jordan, where the mosaics of a fourth- or fifth-century synagogue—this time with representational elements depicting the story of Noah—underlie a Christian church which seems to have been constructed in A.D. 530/1.[13] But here we are in a bilingual Greek/Aramaic setting, almost in the Holy Land itself; and it is better to turn to a contrasting case, the vast synagogue of Sardis in western Asia Minor.[14] In this instance the building which eventually became a synagogue was not originally built as such, but comprised one part of a complex of buildings in the centre of the city, including a bath-house and a gymnasium. The section which by the third century had come into use as a synagogue consisted of a large basilica-like hall with a forecourt; its dimensions far surpass those of any other ancient synagogue, for the main building is some eighty by twenty metres, and the forecourt some twenty metres square. It seems to have reached its completed form as a synagogue in the fourth century, as coins trapped under the mosaic floor show. Some marble revetment also dates to this period, and some adornment still seems to have been added in the fifth and perhaps the sixth century. Some of the dedicatory inscriptions from the mosaic floors and the marble revetments of the walls were published in full long ago,[15] but now the entire corpus has been published by J. H. Kroll.[16] Taken as a group, they clearly support the impression of a firmly Jewish community which is also integrated in the wider city. A number of

12. J. Napoleone-Lemaire and J. C. Balty, *L'église à atrium de la grande colonnade* (1969).

13. C. H. Kraeling, *Gerasa, City of the Decapolis* (1938), 234–41, 318–24, 483ff.; inscriptions, nos. 323–25.

14. A. R. Seager and A. T. Kraabel, "The Synagogue and the Jewish Community," in G. M. A. Hanfmann, *Sardis from Prehistoric to Roman Times* (1983), chap. 9; Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 21–22.

15. L. Robert, *Nouvelles inscriptions de Sardes* I (1964), 37–58.

16. J. H. Kroll, "The Greek Inscriptions of the Sardis Synagogue," *Harv. Th. Rev.* 94 (2001): 5. See now *IJudO* II, 209ff., nos. 53–145.

donors describe themselves as *theosebeis*, a term which we can now be confident meant a gentile attached to a Jewish community without being a full convert.[17] Others are labelled as *bouleutēs*, "town councillor," an indication of high social standing even in a period when this role was frequently an unwelcome burden. Perhaps most striking is the mosaic inscription which reads "Vow of Samoe, *hiereus* and *sophodidaskalos*." In the context *hiereus* (priest) can only mean that he was a *cohen*; *sophodidaskalos* should mean "teacher of wisdom," perhaps to be thought of as a translation of *talmid ḥacham*. Whether we should think of such a person as a "rabbi," and if so how we should (once again) conceive of the relations between the "rabbinic" Judaism of Palestine and that of the diaspora, are questions to which we will come back below.

The Sardis synagogue, however, tells a different story from those of Stobi, Apamea, or Gerasa, for it seems to have remained in use as a synagogue until the seventh century. But all of them will serve to remind us that we have to see the religious history of the later Roman Empire at various different levels, one of which is the elementary one of street-level co-existence, or conflict, between groups professing different beliefs. Jewish synagogues,[18] Christian churches, and pagan temples co-existed as visible structures within the bounds of provincial towns. The temples of course had long been there. But visible, recognisable synagogues were quite a new feature, and churches even more recent. Dura-Europos on the Euphrates may provide a model for the earlier period; when the town was destroyed by the Persians in the 250s, it already had a Christian church and synagogue—but both had been constructed within existing houses like the first version of the synagogue at Stobi.[19] How visible and recognisable as structures synagogues in pagan towns typically were in the classical period remains unclear, though for instance the Alexandrian mob in A.D. 38 had had no difficulty in finding those in the city and forcibly setting up pagan ornaments in them.[20] But the few archaeologically known synagogues of the fourth century were more elaborate and explicitly Jewish structures than any attested before; and churches, constructed as such, were a wholly new and revolutionary feature of the urban

17. J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (1987), 48ff.

18. Not to speak of Samaritan ones, see A. D. Crown, "The Samaritans in the Byzantine Orbit," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 69 (1986): 96–138; A. M. Rabello, *Giustiniano, Ebrei e Samaritani* I (1987).

19. M. Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and Its Art* (1938); C. H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report* VIII.2: *The Christian Building* (1967); C. H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report* VIII.1: *The Synagogue* (1965; revised with additions, 1979); J. Guttmann, ed., *The Dura-Europos Synagogue: A Re-evaluation* (1973).

20. Philo, *Flacc*. 41–52.

landscape. There are slight traces of such purpose-built churches before the conversion of Constantine in 312; but it was the wave of church building, mainly in basilica form, immediately after that, which began the transformation of the ancient city.[21]

The Conversion of Constantine and Its Consequences

The conversion of Constantine to Christianity in 312 is both an undeniable historical fact and (it could be argued) a significant turning point in the nature of the state. For it was from that moment that religious conviction came to structure the activities of the state in a quite new way; above all the Christian emperors came, step by step, to define the rights of their subjects differentially, in terms of their attachment to different religious groups. The year 312 was not, however, the moment when Christianity became "the official religion of the Roman state." For, firstly, there was as yet no such thing; and, secondly, what it did was to make Christianity (whether "Catholic" or Arian) the religion of successive emperors, other than Julian (A.D. 361–63).

It is curious that, in spite of many discussions of various aspects,[22] it remains very difficult to analyse or sum up the impact of the Christian beliefs of Constantine and his successors on the pagan cult practices of the empire. What is certain is that a few prominent temples in the Greek East were destroyed by imperial action already under Constantine;[23] that large amounts of treasure and ornaments were looted from temples;[24] and that a succession of imperial pronouncements were directed against sacrifice, divination, and magical practices.[25] But it is equally certain that for more than half a century the vast majority of pagan temples remained open, and that cults and sacrifices continued. A new, more emphatically Christianising phase, to which we will return below, opened only in the 380s, to reach a sort of culmination in the 430s.

The significance of the period from 312 to the 430s in the history of diaspora Judaism is, firstly, that it was a unique phase of overt co-existence, competition, and conflict between fundamentally different religious systems.

21. R. Krautheimer, "The Constantinian Basilica," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 21 (1967): 115; R. Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture* (1988), 83ff.

22. E.g., A. Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome* (1948); R. MacMullen, *Christianising the Roman Empire* (1984); T. D. Barnes, "Christians and Pagans in the Reign of Constantius," *L'église et l'empire au IV^e siècle* (Entretiens Hardt 34, 1989), 301.

23. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 4, 55–56.

24. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 4, 54.

25. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 2, 45; *Cod. Theod.* 16, 10, 1ff.

This co-existence was first of all, as already indicated, a literal co-existence within the bounds of countless towns, large and small. Secondly, it was an uneasy co-existence, where competition might take peaceful forms, as in Jerome's marvellous story of how the hermit Hilarion secured by the application of holy water the victory of a Christian racing chariot in games held at Gaza: so much faster was the Christian-owned chariot that opponents hardly glimpsed the horses' backs as they sped by.[26] But it was also a co-existence which could at any time break out into communal violence, sometimes prompted by, and often going beyond, the explicit wishes and intentions of the emperors. Far too little has been made, in the religious history of the fourth century, of the evidence for local Christian attacks on temples.[27] Such attacks began already under Constantine (ruling in the East 324–37) and continued under Constantius (337–61).[28] The response was a wave of pagan violence unleashed by the arrival on the throne of a self-professed and militant pagan, Julian, in 361. Julian himself explicitly intended not to create Christian martyrs. His pagan subjects, however, had other ideas and had local scores to settle. To take only two examples, at Heliopolis in Phoenicia a Christian deacon, Cyrillus, had taken part in the smashing of idols as early as the reign of Constantine; when Julian came to the throne the local pagans killed and disembowelled him.[29] Then, under Constantius, at Arethusa in Syria the bishop Mark went about the conversion of pagans "with more spirit than caution" and destroyed a magnificent temple; under Julian he was publicly tortured, thrown into a sewer, and tossed in the air, to land on the upturned styluses of the local pagan schoolboys.[30]

The main significance of this very clear evidence for underlying communal-religious tensions for the position of Judaism is its relevance to similar conflicts in the period of overt Christian militancy in the 380s and after, of which more below. But it should be noted that Ambrose of Milan, in his famous Letter 40 of 388 (one of the prime testimonies to the Christian anti-Jewish militancy of that period) claims that under Julian not only pagans but also Jews had been active in destroying Christian churches:

> And to be sure if I were to talk in terms of the law of peoples [*iure gentium*] I would say how many basilicas of the Church the Jews burned

26. Jerome, *Life of Hilarion* 20.

27. The evidence is collected by G. Fowden, "Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire," *JThSt* 29 (1978): 53.

28. See the important paper by Barnes (n. 22).

29. Theodoret, *Church History* 3, 3.

30. Sozomenus, *Church History* 5, 10.

> in the time of Julian's rule: two at Damascus, of which one has barely been repaired, but at the expense of the Church not the Synagogue; the other basilica lies in squalid ruins. Basilicas were burned in Gaza, Ascalon, Berytus, and almost everywhere in that area, and no one sought revenge. A basilica was also burned at Alexandria by pagans and Jews.

Nearly all of Ambrose's cases relate to the borders of the Holy Land. But the future was to show that street-level conflict, involving Jewish communities, could break out anywhere. Indeed we know that it already had; for almost the earliest of the long series of legislative acts by Christian emperors concerning the Jews were pronouncements by Constantine forbidding Jews to stone or otherwise attack Jewish converts to Christianity.[31]

Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity

That brings us closer to a different level of religious co-existence, contact or conflict, namely the questions of individual conversion to or from paganism, Judaism, or Christianity; of actual dialogues, discussions, or debates conducted across the boundaries of religious systems; and of theoretical or theological expositions of any of these religious systems, either as such or in explicit contrast with any of the others.

To treat these questions adequately would be to write the entire religious and intellectual history of the period. But it may be possible to keep to the very broadest lines, beginning with the last-mentioned level, conscious religious self-definition in contrast with other systems, returning finally to the street-level co-existence and conflict in the half-century from the 380s to the 430s.

It might immediately be objected that to talk of "paganism" at all, as a definable religious system, as an "-ism," is to apply a wholly inappropriate and misleading category. This view could be defended for the classical period proper, though even that was marked by profoundly different philosophical views of the gods and by explicit discussions such as Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*, or later by Porphyry's views on sacrifice as expressed in his *On Abstinence from Living Things*. But by the fourth century the challenge of Christianity had long since forced those who observed the cults of the gods into explicit philosophical reflection on their system of belief and practice—which we therefore may appropriately call paganism; obvious fourth-

31. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 1 = *Cod. Just.* I, 9, 3 = Linder (n. 2), no. 8; *Const. Sirmond.* 4 = *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 5; 9 = Linder (n. 2), no. 10.

century examples are Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries*,[32] and Sallustius, *Concerning the Gods and the Universe*.[33] As a parallel and related development, explicit criticism of Christianity[34] had begun in the second century with Celsus' *Alēthēs Logos* (True Word), to culminate in the Emperor Julian's *Against the Galileans*. Pagan critiques of Judaism as a religious system could also be found in the classical period; most of those which are known are so because they were quoted and answered in Josephus' *Against Apion*, written in Rome in the 90s A.D.[35] Celsus had also related Christianity very firmly to its Jewish context. But with one exception which proves the rule, serious pagan attention to Judaism as a religious system is not well attested in the period of religious co-existence with which we are concerned. All the available evidence is collected and discussed in the second volume of the *magnum opus* of the deeply regretted Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* I–III (1974–84). It may of course be that a pagan literature of this period which did discuss Judaism has been lost; but if so it has left no trace. The exception proving the rule is of course the emperor Julian himself, who is an exception precisely because he was born and brought up as a Christian; he then converted secretly and only declared himself as a pagan in 361.[36] We are not concerned here with the details of his plan to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, except to note that it is beyond question, as recorded by both pagan and Christian sources, that work did start on this project and was then interrupted by fires which Christians took to represent divine intervention.[37] What is significant in this context is Julian's complex three-way analysis of Judaism, Christianity, and paganism, as expressed most fully in his *Against the Galileans*.[38] To summarise drastically, Julian saw Judaism as a traditional culture and set of religious observances, which had its own values but could never claim the cultural level and achievements of classical civilisation; but it was precisely the traditional observances of Judaism which the Christians had reprehensibly rejected, while on the other side abandoning the cults of the pagan gods. What was more, traditional Judaism had once manifested a feature which made it comparable to and compatible with paganism, namely

32. Edited by des Places (1966).

33. Edited by Nock (1926).

34. Well surveyed by R. L. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (1984).

35. L. Troiani, *Commento storico al "contro Apione" di Giuseppe* (1977).

36. See, e.g., G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (1978); P. Athanassiadi-Fowden, *Julian and Hellenism: An Intellectual Biography* (1981).

37. See F. Blanchetière, "Julien. Philhellène, Philosémite, Antichrétien. L'affaire du Temple de Jerusalem (363)," *Journ. Jew. Stud.* 31 (1980): 61.

38. See Wilken (n. 34), chap. 7.

a Temple at which sacrifices were offered: "I wished to show that the Jews agree with the Gentiles (i.e. pagans), except that they believe in only one God. That is indeed peculiar to them and strange to us; since all the rest we have in a manner in common with them—temples, sanctuaries, altars, purifications and certain precepts."[39]

In Julian's conception of a revived paganism, sacrifice was to be the central act; and in seeking to underline the actual or potential compatibility of Judaism and paganism he offers what may be one of the very few attested observations of contemporary Judaism by a (now) pagan observer. For just before the passage quoted above he asserts that sacrifice is not entirely absent from Judaism even now:

> No doubt some sharp-sighted person will answer, "The Jews too do not sacrifice." But I will convict him of being terribly dull-sighted, for in the first place I reply that neither do you (the Christians) observe any one of the other customs observed by the Jews; and, secondly, that the Jews do sacrifice in their own houses(?), and even to this day everything that they eat is consecrated; and they pray before sacrificing, and give the right shoulder to the priests as the first-fruits; but since they have been deprived of their temple, or, as they are accustomed to call it, their holy place, they are prevented from offering the first-fruits of the sacrifice to God.[40]

What exactly Julian means to refer to here is not immediately obvious; for it seems certain that no regular sacrifices, conducted by priests on an altar, persisted, or even could have persisted, after the destruction of the Temple.[41] The inability of the Jews to sacrifice without a Temple is remarked on frequently by Christian authors, with considerable complacency,[42] and represented of course the central reason for Julian's proposed restoration. The most likely explanation, as William Horbury has pointed out to me, is that Julian is thinking of the eating of the Paschal Lamb, as conducted by Jews in their houses—if *en adraktois* is the right reading, and if that is what it means. For the Pesach meal really does embody a direct transference into a domestic context of an element derived originally from the Passover sacrifice in the

39. *Against the Galileans* 306 B, Loeb trans.

40. *Against the Galileans* 305D–306A, Loeb trans.

41. A. Guttman, "The End of the Jewish Sacrificial Cult," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 38 (1967): 137.

42. E.g., Eusebius, *Dem. Ev.* 1, 3; Augustine, *Tractatio adversus Iudaeos* 9–12.

Temple.[43] If what Julian says here is indeed an observation, and an accurate one, the fact is worth some emphasis. For as we have seen, there is almost nothing to suggest that contemporary paganism was marked by curiosity about Judaism; while, as we shall see in more detail below, such attention as Christians ever paid to the realities of the Judaism occupying the same space and time as themselves is shown mainly in two contexts: in legislation of an increasingly repressive kind, and in records of assaults on Jewish synagogues.

Julian's *Against the Galileans* remains by far the most explicit reflection deriving from this period on the interrelations and contrasting histories and values of the three religions. Only Augustine's *City of God* might challenge comparison within in this respect (see text following n. 71 below). But Julian owed his capacity to enter as a pagan into the nature of the Judaeo-Christian tradition to his own upbringing as a Christian. It is in that sense that, as a pagan, he must count as the exception proving the rule. Moreover, although he did note also other features of contemporary Judaism, such as mutual Jewish charity,[44] the Judaism which most deeply attracted him was one which no longer existed, and which, whether by divine intervention or not, he proved unable to revive.

Fourth-Century Judaism

Various sources allege[45] that Julian's initiative had been greeted with great enthusiasm by the Jews of the diaspora, who rushed to participate in the rebuilding of the Temple. That may indeed be so, but our greatest difficulty in trying to map the broad lines of the interrelations of paganism, Judaism, and Christianity in this period is precisely that there is so little testimony by Jews which, explicitly or implicitly, looks outwards to the great conflicts and fundamental changes which were taking place around them. As David Rokeah has argued for a slightly earlier period,[46] the religious debates between Christians and paganism involved Judaism; but the Jews are not known to have participated explicitly. Although our topic is the Judaism of the diaspora, we ought not necessarily to exclude the "rabbinic" literature of Palestine. For, firstly, the question of the relations or non-relations of Palestinian Judaism

43. See N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third-Century Palestine* (1976), 168ff., and the review by W. Horbury in *JThSt* 30 (1979): 324.

44. Julian, *Ep.* 22, Loeb; Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors* II, no. 482.

45. M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule* (1984), 193–94.

46. D. Rokeah, *Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict* (1982).

to the diaspora is precisely one of the large open issues which remain to be decided. And, secondly, the Jewish community of the Holy Land itself lived in a Graeco-Roman world from which pagan practises had by no means disappeared, and which was also increasingly invaded by Christian churches and congregations, as well as by streams of curious and devout pilgrims.[47] One of these was Jerome; and it is unfortunate in the context of an enquiry about diaspora Judaism that, of all the Christian writers of this period, the one who engaged in much the most active exchanges with Jewish teachers did so in the Holy Land; none the less, one clear revelation of his reports of these exchanges is that the "rabbinic Judaism" of the Holy Land was itself a bilingual activity which could be described and expressed in Greek (see text to nn. 76–77 below).

By contrast, as the long and fruitless debate as to whether the *minim* mentioned in rabbinic writings were or were not Christians itself shows that explicit observation of other religious systems is not a prominent feature of these works.[48] So, for instance, the tractate *Avoda Zarah* in the Jerusalem Talmud, like the tractate of the Mishnah on which it comments, is not about the nature of pagan worship, but about how to conduct a Jewish life in a largely pagan context. It is very interesting indeed to see how entirely pagan is the context from whose impurities protection was deemed to be necessary, whether it was the presence of idols, or the question of buying goods sold at a pagan fair.[49] Even the impact of pagan imagery and popular tradition makes itself felt: "Said R. Jonah: 'When Alexander of Macedon wanted, he could swing upward, and he would go up. He travelled upward until he saw the world as a sphere and the sea as a dish. That is why they represent the world as a sphere in the hand [of an idol].' "[50] The reader would find it difficult to guess, reading this work, that in the contemporary Holy Land there were churches, bishops, and Christian congregations. Nor is the wider history of the time more than subliminally visible, though Neusner has argued that the rabbinic works of this period do show, under the unspoken influence of Christianity, a concern with history which had been absent from the Mishnah.[51] Talmudic writings contain no more than a couple of oblique ref-

47. E. D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, A.D. 312–460* (1982).

48. M. Simon, *Verus Israel: études sur les relations entre Chrétiens et Juifs dans l'empire romain (135–425)*[2] (1964; English trans., *Verus Israel*, 1986), chap. 7.

49. Jerusalem Talmud, *Avoda Zarah* 1.4.

50. Jerusalem Talmud, *Avoda Zarah* 3.1, trans. J. Neusner.

51. J. Neusner, *Judaism and Christianity in the Age of Constantine: History, Messiah, Israel and the Initial Confrontation* (1987).

erences to Julian's project to rebuild the Temple.[52] Diocletian on the other hand achieves a higher profile; for instance the terms of his persecution are presented as one possible reason out of several why Samaritan wine was considered unclean: "When Diocletian the King came up here, he issued a decree, saying: 'Every nation must offer a libation, except the Jews.' So the Samaritans made a libation. That is why the sages prohibited their wine."[53] The late Roman Holy Land, with its separate religious communities, Christian, of various persuasions, pagan, Jewish, and Samaritan—mutually hostile but necessarily inhabiting neighbouring streets and fields—would offer a fascinating study. And the "rabbinic" literature of the Jewish community there might also in principle offer one window on the life of the Jewish diaspora overseas; except that even bare allusions to identifiable places beyond the borders of the Holy Land are very few.[54] And, moreover, the criteria for the historical study of this material have not yet been established.

It would of course be still more illuminating if the communities of the diaspora of this crucial period had left evidence through which they could speak for themselves. Was the Mishnah known to and used by them too? Did their rabbis prepare commentaries on it? Did they indeed have rabbis at all? Or are we speaking (notionally) of a quite different Judaism, necessarily that of a significant proportion of the Jewish people at that time, of which however all real trace has disappeared? For if the Judaism of the diaspora in this period did produce any literature, it has been entirely lost. A survey of ancient Jewish literature, in all genres and in whatever language, produces not a single case of a Jewish work which is known to have been written in the diaspora between A.D. 312 and 440.[55] It has indeed been boldly asserted that the late Roman work in Latin called *Collatio legum Mosaicarum et Romanarum*, a not very perceptive comparison of Jewish and Roman law as applied to a number of separate issues, was written by a Jew living in Rome in the second half of the fourth century.[56] Anything is possible: but it is necessary to underline just how isolated such a work, if really Jewish, would then seem.

If the Judaism of the diaspora can speak for itself at all, it is only through the physical remains of its synagogues, some of which have been discussed above; its inscriptions, whether from synagogues or tombs, or isolated; and

52. Avi-Yonah (n. 45), 197–98.

53. Jerusalem Talmud, *Avoda Zarah* 5.4, trans. J. Neusner.

54. A. Neubauer, *La Géographie du Talmud* (1868), seems to be the only available survey.

55. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1.

56. L. Cracco-Ruggini, "Tolleranza e intolleranza nella società tardoantica: il caso degli ebrei," *Richerche di storia sociale e religiosa* 23 (1983): 33.

occasional papyri. But of the known papyri written in Hebrew characters only the *ketubba* of A.D. 417, mentioned above, is securely dated.[57] This is not the place to attempt to analyse all the documentary evidence for the diaspora which dates, or may date, to this period.[58] But it may be worth returning to one question: were there rabbis in the late Roman diaspora? The evidence consists firstly of references to persons, like the *hiereus* and *sophodidaskalos* from Sardis (see text following n. 17 above), who are recorded on inscriptions in terms which suggest a role or function comparable to that of a rabbi. Then there are the people described in the undatable Jewish epitaphs of Rome as *nomomathēs*, "learned in the Law,"[59] or *mathētēs sophōn*, "disciple of the wise."[60] The actual term "rabbi" is also attested on inscriptions.[61] For instance, it appears on an enigmatic and isolated graffito of the mid-fourth century from Cyrene,[62] which reads either "Lord, help the rabbi" or "Help, Lord of the rabbi."[63] A "prayer of Rabbi Attikos" (*euchē rabbē Attikou*) is also recorded on a third-century inscription from Cyprus.[64] But the term also appears in Italy, perhaps first in an inscription of the fourth century from Brusciano near Naples; it begins with the word *shalom* written in Hebrew and is adorned with a shofar, menorah, and palm branch. The Latin text reads "Here lies Rabbi Abba Maris the honoured one."[65] A similar mixture of (rather more extensive) Hebrew and Latin appears on the epitaph of a Jewish girl from Venosa (Venusia) for whom mourning was said by "two *apostuli* and two *rebbites*."[66] If *apostuli* has the normal meaning of *apostoli*, emissaries of the patriarch, the inscription would both confirm the patriarch's influence in Italy (text to n. 3 above) and (presumably) date from before the *excessus* (cessation?) of the patriarchs which is alluded to in a law of 429.[67] But nothing serves to date the epitaph of the "daughter of Rabbi Abundantius" (*filia Rebbitis Abundanti*)

57. C. Sirat, *Les papyrus en caractères hebraïques trouvés en Égypte* (1985).

58. It is surveyed, on geographical basis, in Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1, 1–88.

59. Frey (n. 1), no. 333.

60. Frey (n. 1), no. 508.

61. S. J. D. Cohen, "Epigraphic Rabbis," *JQR* 72 (1981–82): 1.

62. *SEG* XXXI, no. 1578G.

63. P. W. van der Horst, "Lord, Help the Rabbi: The Interpretation of SEG XXX 1578b," *JJS* 38 (1987): 102.

64. Frey (n. 1), no. 736.

65. E. Miranda, "Due iscrizioni greco-giudaiche della Campania," *Riv. Arch. Cr.* 55 (1979): 337 = *SEG* XXIX, no. 968 = Noy (n. 1), no. 22.

66. Frey (n. 1), no. 611 = Noy (n. 1), no. 86.

67. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 29 = Linder (n. 2), no. 53.

found at Salerno in Italy,[68] or the Latin inscription from Emerita (Mérida) in Spain mentioning *Rebbi Se[nior]* and *Rebbi Ja[cob]*, which is probably medieval.[69] From Volubilis in Mauretania Tingitana, where a Greek inscription of the third century confirms that there was a "*synagōgē* of the *Ioudeoi*," a Hebrew inscription which may be of the fourth century reveals a daughter of a Rabbi, MṬRWN' BT RBY YHWDH NḤ.[70] Few as they are, these inscriptions are invaluable, because they are firmly located in space, if less so in time. Through them, as through the inscription of 383 from Catania (text to n. 1 and following above), the late Roman diaspora does speak. They tend to confirm the importance there too of the study of the Law, the gradual revival of Hebrew, and the coming into currency of the term *rabbi*—or rather *rebbi*, now treated as a Latin word which can be declined and given a genitive (*rebbitis*) and a plural (*rebbites*). But there our strictly Jewish evidence, so far as I can determine, stops. New evidence may one day enable the diaspora of the late Roman world to speak for itself. But so far it does not.

The Christians and Judaism

If we want to know more of the late Roman diaspora, we have no choice but to see it through Christian eyes, with all the problems that that entails. The first problem in fact is whether or to what extent Christian writings allow us to see the actual contemporary diaspora at all, as opposed to that Judaism which Christians took as being revealed to them by the Bible. For the claims of Christianity to the inheritance of the Old Testament, to the right to see the fundamental message of the Old Testament as having been the foretelling of Christ, to the assertion that Christ had indeed been the Messiah foretold, and to the status of being the "true Israel"[71] all meant that Judaism was integral to Christian writing. If we look for Jews and Judaism in the overwhelming mass of the Christian writing of the period, in Greek and Latin, we shall find too much. If Jewish writing (all from the Holy Land) paid little overt attention to Christianity (though rather more to problematic features of paganism as it affected normal life), while pagan writers, Julian excepted, paid almost no attention to Judaism, Christian writers amply make up for the averted gaze of their neighbours by the centrality of Judaism for

68. Frey (n. 1), no. 568 = Noy (n. 1), no. 36.

69. Frey (n. 1), no. 665a; see Noy (n. 1), no. 197, dating it to the eighth to ninth century.

70. Y. Le Bohec, "Inscriptions juives et judaïsantes de l'Afrique romaine," *Antiquités Africaines* 17 (1981): 165, nos. 79–80.

71. The *Verus Israel* of the fundamental work of Simon (n. 48).

them, and (more rarely) by extensive critiques of paganism. Augustine's *City of God* of course displays both features: in books 1–7 a devastating analysis of the internal contradictions of Roman paganism, and in 15–18 an obsessive demonstration of the underlying Christian message of the Old Testament.

Christian critiques of paganism are not our concern here, though actual Christian measures against paganism certainly are, for the evolving position of the Jews can be best seen in relation to them. But the central problem is how to use the vast mass of Christian writing as historical evidence for the Judaism and the Jewish communities of the period. For this problem to be addressed properly, it would be necessary to consider the whole of the Christian literature of the period, and its relation to Jews and Judaism, distinguishing (a) confrontations with Judaism as a timeless system whose features are determined by the Old Testament; (b) apparent attributions of beliefs and attitudes to contemporary Jews; (c) apparent reports of contemporary Jewish customs; (d) reports or descriptions of actual episodes, dated and located in space. These last, while they may well still retain highly tendentious features, must inevitably be the most promising material on which a historian can work. They may be considered along with the legislation of the Christian emperors relating to Jews and Judaism, all of it collected, translated, and discussed in exemplary fashion by Linder.[72] For it was, paradoxically, in the shape of legislation of an increasingly repressive kind that Christians of the period most fully revealed a detailed attention to the realities of contemporary Jewish life, of a sort which it is a major labour to find in their theological literature.

What follows is not claimed to be the result of the type of systematic analysis of Christian literature adumbrated above, an enterprise from time to time attempted in part,[73] but never carried through in full. It merely offers some examples of the types of material which Christian literature presents, and of the problems to which it gives rise. I ignore here, of course, all of the general and timeless characterisations of Judaism as a religion, which are integral to Christian writing, and turn instead to apparent attributions of belief to contemporary Jews. For instance, two extraordinarily powerful evocations of Jewish messianic and apocalyptic beliefs are presented by Jerome in his commentaries on the minor prophets. Firstly, writing in the 390s on *Zephaniah* 3:8–9, he says:

72. Above n. 2.

73. S. Krauss, "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers," *JQR* 5 (1892): 122; see also especially S. J. D. Cohen, "Pagan and Christian Evidence on the Ancient Synagogue," in L. I. Levine, ed., *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (1987), 159.

> This the Jews interpret as relating to the advent of the Christus whom they hope will come, and say that when all the nations have been gathered together, and the wrath of the Lord has been poured forth upon them, the world is to be consumed in the fire of his anger. And just as it was before the building of the tower (of Babel), when all peoples spoke a single tongue, so, when all have turned to the worship of the true God, they will speak Hebrew, and the whole world will serve the Lord.[74]

In the middle of the next decade, in his *Commentary on Zachariah*, Jerome gives a rather different, and perhaps even more vivid, account of Jewish (and Judaeo-Christian) expectations of the end of time:

> The Jews and judaising Christians promise themselves at the end of time the building-up of Jerusalem, and the pouring forth of waters from its midst, flowing down to both seas. Then circumcision is again to be practised, victims are to be sacrificed and all the precepts of the laws are to be kept, so that it will not be a matter of Jews becoming Christians but of Christians becoming Jews. On that day, they say, when the Christus will take his seat to rule in a golden and jewelled Jerusalem, there will be no more idols nor varieties of worship of the divinity, but there will be one God, and the whole world will revert to solitude, that is to its ancient state.[75]

This passage is very notable in that the expectations attributed to Jews and judaising Christians embrace both Christians and pagans, as well as a full-scale restoration of the Temple cult. But the specific idea, present in the earlier passage, that all survivors of the Day of Judgement will speak Hebrew, makes no appearance. It seems impossible to tell whether Jerome has derived these two visions from different Jewish interlocutors in Bethlehem, and if so, whether either or both might have found subscribers in the diaspora—or whether he has been carried away by his all-too-fluent command of rhetoric.

What is of course certain is that he did engage in serious exchanges with rabbis in the Holy Land[76] and can report in detail on precisely that world of rabbinic scholarship and exegesis which was just then producing the Jerusalem Talmud. Thus in Letter 121, written from Bethlehem in 405, he can report that the *traditiones* (doctrines) of the Pharisees are now called (in Greek) *deuterōseis* (repetitions), and that Jewish teachers (*magistri*, *sapientes*, or—in

74. *CCL* LXXVIA, 700.

75. *CCL* LXXVIA, 885.

76. J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (1975), esp. chaps. 14–15.

Greek—*sophoi*) would give rulings on questions such as the Sabbath limits. The teaching of the "wise," taking place on fixed days, could be described in a set Greek terminology: "the *sophoi deuterousin*"—"the *sapientes* teach the *traditiones*." Similarly, in his Commentary on Habbakuk[77] he records approaching a Jew at Lydda "who among them was called *sapiens* and *deuterōtēs*." It seems clear that his Jewish contacts could and did explain the system to him in Greek. The question of how profound, if profound at all, was the gulf between the Holy Land and the diaspora presents itself once again. Fifteen years later, Augustine, writing his *Against an Adversary of the Law and the Prophets* at Hippo in North Africa, could also note that Jewish teaching of unwritten traditions was called *deuterōsis*:[78] had he learned this at second hand, or from personal observation there? He himself records that his fellow bishop at Oea in Tripolitania had been forced by violent reactions among his congregation, especially the Greeks, when faced with a controversial reading in Jonah, to ask the local Jews what reading there was in their *Hebraei codices*.[79] Is it possible that the Hebrew Bible really existed there in codex (i.e., book) form rather than in scrolls? But in fact Jerome, replying to Augustine on this point, quietly corrects him, and speaks of the reading to be found "in the *volumina* [scrolls] of the Jews."[80] Equally suggestive is Jerome's report of how in Rome in 384 he was given some *volumina* by a "Hebraeus" who had borrowed them from a synagogue with the intention of reading them—*quasi lecturus*.[81] In this case *volumina* clearly does mean scrolls, for Jerome has to unroll one of them to read the relevant passage—*volumen Hebraeum replico*.[82] We need not doubt that there was at least one synagogue, as a recognisable building, in Rome, for under the rule of the usurper Maximus (383–88) it was burned down, evidently by Christians.[83] The report of a synagogue functioning also as a sort of lending library, and thus contributing to intellectual dialogue with Christians, adds a different element to the picture.

As is well known, such day-to-day contacts and mutual influences are also very well attested in the 380s at the other end of the Mediterranean, at Antioch. For they are the subject of the sermons delivered there by John Chrysostom as presbyter in 386–87.[84] His sermons, though inevitably hostile in tone,

77. 1, 2, 15/17, *CCL* LXXVIA, 610.
78. *PL* XLII, 637.
79. *Ep.* 71, 5.
80. Aug., *Ep.* 75, 22.
81. Aug., *Ep.* 36, 1.
82. Aug., *Ep.* 36, 13.
83. Ambrose, *Ep.* 40, 25.
84. R. L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (1983); translation and commentary on the

are not directed against the Jews of Antioch as such, but against Christians from his congregation who allowed themselves to be drawn into participating in the Jewish festivals, both the season of High Festivals—New Year with its trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles—in the autumn, and Passover in the spring. We should not miss the significance of this evidence that the annual cycle of festivals was indeed observed by the synagogue community of Antioch, and in such a way as to attract the attention, favourable or hostile, of their Christian neighbours.[85] Chrysostom reverts several times to the destruction of the Temple, to the consequent Jewish inability to sacrifice, and to the failure of Julian's attempt to restore it. But the attractions of Judaism are strong—partly because the synagogues were revered as the place where the Law and the Prophets were kept.[86] Catholic Christianity was still threatened on all sides: "here we are fighting not only against Jews but against the pagans and many heretics."[87]

The sense of danger and rivalry which Chrysostom expresses here was however already in the course of being answered by appropriate imperial action. The reign of Theodosius I (379–95) had begun with an emphatic assertion of the sole legality of the Catholic Church.[88] Thereafter all non-Catholic forms of Christianity were to suffer progressive disability and oppression on the part of the state. Action against the pagan cults followed more slowly and, in many places, was preceded and stimulated by local Christian violence, led by bishops and often carried out by bands of monks. Just as Chrysostom was delivering his warning sermons, his fellow citizen of Antioch, Libanius, was addressing his *Oration* 30: *On Behalf of the Temples*, to Theodosius: surely imperial orders, however repressive of the pagan cults, had never authorised the physical destruction of the temples, such as was now being witnessed in the East? They had indeed not done so; but within a few years orders prohibiting all forms of sacrifice or pagan cult practices did follow.[89] If the actual destruction of temples was still not specifically ordered, it was none the less just at this time (391) that imperial agents and local Christians, acting together, destroyed the great temple of Serapis in Alexandria. Similar acts of destruction followed elsewhere, following an ir-

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discourses by P. Harkins, *Saint John Chrysostom: Discourses against Judaising Christians* (Fathers of the Church 68, 1979).

85. A. M. Rabello, "L'osservanza delle feste ebraiche nell'impero romano," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 6 (1981–82): 57.

86. *Discourse* 1, 5, 2.

87. *Discourse* 7, 3, 3, trans. Harkins (n. 84).

88. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 1, 2 (380) and 3 (381).

89. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 10, 10, A.D. 391; 12, 392.

regular rhythm largely dictated by local Christian initiatives. If it was imperial agents who destroyed temples in Carthage in 399,[90] it was the initiative taken by Porphyry, bishop of Gaza, which led to the destruction of all the temples there in the first years of the fifth century, and to the use of stones from the temple of Marnas to pave the courtyard of a new church.[91]

The fundamental change in the religious climate which began in the 380s is the essential background which must be borne in mind if we are to understand the very significant but in many ways less drastic change which affected the Jewish communities of the empire in the same period. The change is most clearly visible in imperial legislation; given the excellent collection, translation, and analysis of the texts by Linder,[92] we may keep to the essentials. Before this period imperial attention to the position of the Jews had been largely directed to two issues: preventing the ownership, or at any rate the conversion and circumcision, of Christian slaves by Jews; and defining the limited number and nature of Jewish community officials who could enjoy exemption from service on town councils. The emperors at various times defined these officials as *patriarchae* (see text to n. 2 above), *presbyteri*, *hiereis* (priests), *archisynagogi*, and *patres synagogarum*,[93] thereby, as mentioned earlier, expressing an awareness of day-to-day Jewish community life which is not so evident in other contexts. The earliest of these pronouncements, dating to A.D. 321, is simultaneously the earliest evidence for the existence of an established Jewish community in Cologne.[94]

In the 380s, however, new themes begin to come in. In 383, for instance, the emperors Gratian, Valentian, and Theodosius declared the confiscation of the property of Christian converts to paganism, Judaism, or Manichaeism,[95] perfectly reflecting the anxieties which Chrysostom was to express three years later. Judaism itself, however, was at all times stated to be legal, for Jews. Thus in 393 Theodosius and his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, wrote to the *comes* of the Orient as follows:

> It is sufficiently established that the sect of the Jews is prohibited by no law. We are therefore gravely disturbed by the interdiction imposed in some places on their assemblies. Your Sublime Magnitude shall, upon

90. Augustine, *City of God* 18, 54.

91. The story is told in the biography of Porphyry by Mark the Deacon, edited by H. Grégoire and M. A. Kugener (1930).

92. Linder (n. 2).

93. E.g. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 2 and 4 = Linder (n. 2), no. 9, of A.D. 330.

94. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 3 = Linder (n. 2), no. 7.

95. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 7, 3 = Linder (n. 2), no. 16.

> reception of this order, repress with due severity the excess of those who presume to commit illegal deeds under the name of the Christian religion and attempt to destroy and despoil synagogues.[96]

The emperors were clearly in this instance trying to stem the tide of popular Christian feeling, as they did again in relation to Illyricum in 397.[97] There are however also signs of an opposing current of popular action, from the Jewish side: in 408 Honorius and Theodosius II banned the celebration of Purim by the mock crucifixion of a Haman figure as a deliberate insult to neighbouring Christians.[98] The ban seems to reflect episodes like the one of a few years later at Inmestar in Syria, between Antioch and Chalcis, when Jewish villagers were reported to have crucified a Christian boy as a deliberate act of mockery, and hence became involved in clashes with the local Christians.[99] In 408 also, the emperors took measures against the disturbance of Catholic services by Donatists, heretics, Jews, or pagans.[100] But one of the most significant continuing themes in imperial legislation is the (sometimes half-hearted) restraint on the destruction or seizure of synagogues and their contents by local Christians, accompanied by repeated statements of a ban on the construction of new synagogues. A pronouncement of Honorius and Theodosius II dating to 423 will best express the complexities of the situation:

> It seems right that in the future none of the synagogues of the Jews shall either be indiscriminately seized or put on fire. If there are some synagogues that were seized or vindicated to churches or indeed consecrated to the venerable mysteries in a recent undertaking and after the law was passed, they shall be given in exchange new places, on which they could build, that is, to the measure of the synagogues taken. Votive offerings as well, if they are in fact seized, shall be returned to them provided that they have not yet been dedicated to the sacred mysteries; but if a venerable consecration does not permit their restitution, they shall be given the exact price for them. No synagogue shall be constructed from now on, and the old ones shall remain in their state.[101]

96. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 9, trans. Linder (n. 2), no. 21.
97. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 12 = Linder (n. 2), no. 25.
98. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 18 = Linder (n. 2), no. 36.
99. Socrates, *Church History* 7, 16.
100. *Const. Sirmond.* 14 = Linder (n. 2), no. 38.
101. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 2, trans. Linder (n. 2), no. 47.

The other significant theme was the succession of pronouncements banning Jews (and Samaritans—and later also pagans) first from the imperial service (*militia*), then from advocacy; finally, in 438 Jews and Samaritans were also barred from all *honores* and *dignitates*, apparently meaning offices held in cities.[102] Throughout, none the less, it is never implied that Judaism is itself illegal, if practised by Jews, or that synagogues do not have the protection of the law. However, that protection, as expressed in 433, might be limited and retrospective. It is moreover highly significant, as Linder points out, that Judaism, which had earlier been described as a *religio*, became in 416, and after, a *superstitio*.[103] The vocabulary of imperial rhetoric reflects a fundamental shift of attitudes.

All the issues sketched in this paper come together in the account by the local bishop, Severus, of how in 417 or 418 the well-established Jewish community of one of the two towns on Minorca was converted under the threat of mass violence, and its synagogue destroyed and turned into a church. The account, printed twice in Migne,[104] and excellently discussed by Hunt, and now by Bradbury,[105] need only be touched on here. Its importance in this particular context lies not so much in its narrative of the sequence of events, vivid and moving though that is, as in its revelation of the scale, organisation, and public standing of the local Jewish community as it had been up to that point.

The Jewish community of the small town of Mago consisted of at least 540 persons, and possessed a synagogue situated in the town, containing silver vessels and "sacred books" (*libri sancti*). The leading figure of the community, Theodorus, is described as having held all the offices within the town council (*curia*), and as *defensor* and *patronus* of his fellow citizens (*municipes*); he owned property also on the neighbouring island of Majorca. Within the community he functioned as a *legis doctor* (teacher of the law), surely (cf. above) yet another reference to a "rabbinic" role. It must be relevant that Jerome uses the same expression, *legis doctor*, to describe the learned Jew from Tiberias who in the late 380s helped him with the proper names in Chronicles.[106] Seve-

102. Theodosius, *Novella* 3 = Linder (n. 2), no. 54.

103. Linder (n. 2), 57–58.

104. Migne, *PL* XX, 731–46; XLI, 821–32.

105. E. D. Hunt, "St. Stephen in Minorca: An Episode in Jewish-Christian Relations in the Early Fifth Century A.D.," *JThSt* 33 (1982b): 106; S. Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (1996).

106. *PL* XXIX, 401ff.; M. Pavan, "I cristiani e il mondo ebraico nell'età di Teodosio 'il Grande,'" *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia. Perugia* 3 (1965–66): 398; Kelly (n. 76), 158–59.

rus, however, notes that Theodorus' formal title in the Jewish community was *pater patrum* (father of the fathers). We meet also other leading figures, with a mixture of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin names (Ruben, Meletius, Innocentius, Galilaeus, Caecilianus, Florinus, Arthemisia) typical of a late Roman Jewish community. Meletius turns out to be versed in both Greek and Latin literature.

The conversion of this entire community to Christianity was inspired by the bringing to the island of relics of Saint Stephen and began with a march in procession to Mago from the other town, Iammo, where there were no Jewish inhabitants. On arrival at Mago they invited the Jewish leaders to a debate and then advanced on the synagogue singing hymns, to be met with stones hurled down on them by Jewish women. The studiously self-righteous narrative cannot conceal the fact that in the face of this mass threat the Jews retreated, and the Christians occupied the synagogue and burned it down. The silver ornaments were returned to the Jews, but the *libri sancti* removed, allegedly to protect them from the Jews themselves (*ne apud Iudaeos iniuriam paterentur*).

Three days later a debate began on the site of the ruined synagogue, before a large crowd of Christians; then step by step there followed the conversion of each of the *primarii* (leadering men) of the Jewish community in turn. Seventeen days after leaving Iammo the Christians were able to return in triumph. When Easter was celebrated, 540 souls had been added to the Christian congregation. One final demonstration of their new faith was required: the foundations of the synagogue were dug up, and for the construction of the new basilica which was to rise in its place, the converted Jews not only contributed funds but carried stones on their shoulders.

This episode, far from the only one of its kind attested in this period,[107] serves to make very clear the background of local Christian pressure on other religious groups against which contemporary emperors were issuing their pronouncements. There had indeed been a profound change of mood against the earlier period, which might well be seen as an exceptionally favourable one for the Jewish diaspora, when no other religious group could claim a secure dominance. Yet even this later period should not be seen as one of systematic persecution;[108] there is moreover ample evidence of Jewish communities throughout the Roman world in the fifth and sixth centuries.[109] There was, however, a significantly increased danger of mob violence on the

107. See Hunt (n. 105).

108. J. Seaver, *Persecution of the Jews in the Roman Empire (300–438)* (1952).

109. Rabello (n. 18).

part of Christians, and the legal status and the rights of Jews were substantially reduced. But the right to practise their religion remained in principle and, often precariously, in fact. It is something of a paradox that along with the archaeological and documentary evidence, it is precisely the increasingly repressive legislative pronouncements of the emperors on the one hand and Christian records of their own hostile measures on the other which give us the best hope of recapturing the reality of a distinctive phase in Jewish history. Its beginnings are obscure, but we might see it as going back to the second century, and as coming to a sort of fruition in the fourth. That is to say that the evidence, scattered and disparate as it is, suggests that the period of unresolved tensions between pagans and Christians may have been a relatively favourable and prosperous one for the settled Jewish communities of the Graeco-Roman diaspora. If so, then what we can dimly perceive is quite a significant chapter in the communal and religious history of the Jewish people. That it has been on the whole a neglected chapter makes the many remaining questions about the nature of Judaism in the late Roman diaspora all the more important.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Christian Emperors, Christian Church, and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, A.D. 379–450 *

Cessent igitur, quaeso, haec de cetero usque in finem per te et sapientiam tuam et sudores et labores singulorum dierum, qui semper ecclesiis prosunt, pro quibus constituat te nobis deus ecclesiae propugnatorem in longa et pacifica tempora, ut paulum quidem ex his improvisis malis respirantes, quae propter maledictum Nestorium mundus expertus est, adversum gentiles Phoeniciae possimus obsistere et Palaestinae et Arabiae et adversum cuncta Iudaica et maxime quae sunt in Laodicia (subito enim impii Iudaei archidiaconum, mirabilem virum, in theatrum deducentes puniverunt), insuper et contra eos qui in Cilicia effrenate resistunt.

E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* 1.4, no. 287, pp. 208–10

From now on, I beg you, let these (troubles) cease for good, through yourself and your wisdom and your everyday toils and efforts, which are ever for the good of the churches, and for which let God establish you on your behalf as the champion of the Church for a long and peaceful period. Thus, being able for a moment to catch our breath after these unexpected evils, which the world has experienced on account of the cursed Nestorius, we may stand up against the pagans of Phoenicia and Palaestina and Arabia, and against all the Jewish goings-on and above all those in Laodicea (for recently the impious Jews took

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an archdeacon, an excellent man, into the theatre and beat him), and beyond that also against those (bishops) who in Cilicia (still) insanely resist (reconciliation).

Introduction

This sudden side-light on Jewish-Christian relations in the fifth century comes from Iohannes, archbishop of Antioch, writing to Proclus, his counterpart in Constantinople, in 435. What we are reading is in fact a sixth-century Latin translation of a letter originally written in Greek, and referring to the long-drawn-out and acutely controversial process by which, after the Council of Ephesus in 431, most of the original supporters of the Nestorian, or "two-nature," position had agreed to a formula of reconciliation with the victorious proponents of a "one-nature" understanding of Christ, led by Cyril of Alexandria. Iohannes himself, originally Nestorius' main proponent, had yielded and now found himself regarded as a traitor by those who still resisted, including the Cilician bishops to whom he refers.

Iohannes was writing fifty-six years after the accession of Theodosius I in 379, which it is entirely reasonable to see as the decisive moment in the adhesion of the Roman state to Christianity, in its commitment to the step-by-step suppression of paganism, and also in the proclamation by the emperor, a couple of years later, of the state's support for what we can label as either "orthodox" or "catholic" belief, in essence subscription to the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Trinity.

Since that time, a division into twin empires, ruled from Rome or Ravenna on the one hand and Constantinople on the other, had come about on the death of Theodosius in 395; while with the accession of Theodosius' very young grandson, Theodosius II, in 408 an absolute and much-advertised commitment to Christian piety had come to mark the imperial court in Constantinople.

The position of the church might then have been perceived as wholly secure. But, as Iohannes' words show, that was not how it felt to Christians at the time. The reverberations of the dispute over the nature, or natures, of Christ, which had led to the Council of Ephesus, had been felt all round the late Roman world, in the Latin West as well as the Greek East. Even apart from that, an obsessive concern with the threat posed by long lists of named heretical groups marks both Christian writing and the laws issued by the emperors. Similarly, pagans, though suffering repeated blows, and progressively deprived of positive rights and of protection under the law, still functioned

in the Christian imagination as a hostile chorus, lamenting Christian success and rejoicing in disaster. But above all, and in a way which we ought to find noteworthy and surprising, the Jewish presence was also felt as a recurrent threat. "Presence" in this sense means literal presence, in the remarkable range of evidence available to us for Jewish communities of this period in the cities of the Greek East. But it also means the presence in the minds of Christians of a perceived threat, or challenge. Both aspects are illustrated in Iohannes' letter, as is also the backdrop of the still flourishing, if rapidly Christianised, Greek city. It is perhaps important to stress this point. The rigorous and impressive collection of evidence by J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz for the eventual decline and fall of the Roman city, shows no systematic decline datable as early as the first half of the fifth century.[1] Moreover, as we will see, a quite high proportion of the (relatively few) Greek cities whose late Roman phase has been analysed in detail also provide archaeological or epigraphic evidence for Jewish communities.

Laodicea, in the province of Syria Prima, is not such a case, and the episode reported by Iohannes is our only evidence for a Jewish presence there in the first half of the fifth century. We have no context to explain how or why the Jews there could have had the temerity to beat an archdeacon publicly in the city's theatre. But the report functions both as evidence that there indeed was a Jewish community there, and as a reflection of that general anxiety which I have already mentioned: the settlement (up to a point) of the Nestorian controversy was, in Iohannes' eyes, an opportunity to turn to confronting external enemies, namely pagans and Jews. As we will see, the idea that there was an ideological, or religious, challenge from Judaism was not purely fanciful; and, what is more, there were several occasions other than the episode in Laodicea when "challenge" meant actual physical violence.

In this context of religious co-existence, competition, and on occasion violent communal strife, both paganism and those forms of Christianity currently judged to be heretical suffered from progressively more severe legal penalties. The practice of Judaism by Jews did not. As we will see, though restrictions were placed on Jews, above all as regards the conversion of Christians, the practice of Judaism enjoyed legal recognition, and even (against considerable pressures) legal protection.

This paper seeks to do no more than to sketch the main elements of religious co-existence, competition, and conflict, as between Christianity and Judaism, in the Greek East in the late fourth and first half of the fifth century,

1. See J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (2001).

and to do so as regards the diaspora, ignoring Palestine (the official name of the Holy Land in the period in question). It does so for two reasons. One is that two major recent contributions by Seth Schwartz have both, implicitly, taken the Jewish history of this period as meaning the history of the Jewish people in Palestine.[2] But that is emphatically not the whole story. Secondly, the documentary and archaeological evidence for Jewish life in the Greek East outside Palestine has been significantly enriched by new discoveries, and by the re-dating of older evidence. Thirdly, as indicated already, the range of evidence for Jews and Jewish life in Christian sources is considerable, and requires re-examination. Though there is quite striking documentary and iconographic evidence for Jewish life in and around this period, we do however lack any Jewish literature written in the Greek diaspora. So any conceptions which we have of beliefs or attitudes from the Jewish side, or of Jewish theological thought, have to come from inscriptions or iconography, or from the glimpses available between the lines of Christian sources.

This paper will therefore quickly review the legislation of 379–450 as it affected the Jewish communities of the Greek East; it will then analyse the main epigraphic and archaeological data, some very new, and others which have recently been re-evaluated and re-dated, to place them in this emphatically Christian wider context; and it will finally assess the evidence of Christian sources for the presence of Jews, and for Christian relations with them. The result, it is hoped, will stimulate a re-consideration of the scale and significance of the Jewish presence in the Christian Greek world, and of Christian awareness of Judaism as a rival.

The Jewish diaspora under the pagan Empire of the first three centuries A.D. has been very fully studied in recent work.[3] But we need to realise that a Jewish diaspora in an emphatically Christian empire, particularly if the evidence seems to show it as numerous, active, and confident (and even on occasion aggressive), represents a quite new and distinctive phase in religious history.

2. S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (2001), and "Historiography on the Jews in the Talmudic Period," in M. Goodman, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Studies* (2002), 36. The importance of the diaspora in the Greek-speaking world is emphasised by the publication in 2004 of the three volumes of *IJudO*.

3. See, for example, J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 B.C.E.–117 C.E.)* (1996), the papers collected in T. Rajak, *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction* (2001), and E. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (2002).

Imperial Pronouncements

Given the thorough treatment of this topic in Linder's excellent study of Roman imperial enactments,[4] all that is required here is a brief survey to remind ourselves of the essential features of Jewish legal status in the Christian empire, and to note any features of imperial pronouncements which reflect either circumstances in any particular locality or region, or the general nature of Jewish-Christian relations. It should be stressed that the theme of this paper is the Jewish diaspora of the Greek East, and it concerns neither the circumstances of Jews in Rome and the Latin West,[5] nor the Jewish community of Palestine and its Patriarch (fully discussed in an excellent work by Martin Jacobs).[6] Given this restricted regional focus, it therefore needs to be stressed also that, with minimal exceptions, all the "laws" issued by late Roman emperors were in fact letters written to officials holding office in particular regions. Especially after the division of 395, it also makes a fundamental difference whether the "law," or letter, concerned was issued from Italy (Rome or Ravenna) or from Constantinople. The consolidation of these laws into a single series in the *Theodosian Code* of 437 created an illusion. In reality there were two separate, but loosely related, spheres of legislation.

The essentials of the legal status of Jews and Jewish communities in fact remained the same as they had been since Constantine: (1) Jewish worship conducted by Jews was legal; (2) the conversion of Christians, including Christian slaves owed by Jews, was illegal and subject to penalties; the rulings varied as to whether Jewish ownership of Christian slaves was permitted at all; (3) attacks on synagogues were illegal, and subject to penalties; (4) intermarriage between Jews and Christians was forbidden; (5) decisions on membership of Jewish communities were a matter for Jewish authorities; (6) certain officials of Jewish communities were exempt from curial obligations; (7) Jewish law applied only to issues of Jewish religious rules, unless both parties in a civil suit agreed on arbitration under Jewish law.

Without it being necessary to enter into all the details here, a new context

4. A. Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation*, edited with introduction, translation, and commentary (1987).

5. See above all L. Rutgers, *The Jews in Late Ancient Rome: Evidence of Cultural Interaction in the Roman Diaspora* (2000); B. Blumenkranz, *Juifs et Chrétiens dans le monde occidental, 430–1096* (1960); D. Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe* I: *Italy, Spain, Gaul* (1993), II: *City of Rome* (1995); S. Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (1996); M. Williams, "The Jews of Early Byzantine Venusia," *JJS* 50 (1999): 38.

6. M. Jacobs, *Die Institutionen des jüdischen Patriarchen* (1995).

for imperial rulings relating to Jews is perceptible in some of the pronouncements from the reigns of Arcadius (395–408) and of Theodosius II (408–50), namely an increased likelihood of communal violence and abuse, initiated by either Christians or Jews. One example comes from Arcadius' reign, in the form of a letter to the praetorian prefect of Illyricum, sent on 17 June 397, telling him to inform provincial governors that Jews must not be assaulted and that their synagogues must be left in peace.[7] On 29 May 408, a letter in the name of the seven-year-old emperor Theodosius was sent to Anthemius, praetorian prefect of Oriens, ordering Jews not to burn an effigy of Haman, evidently at Purim, and not to burn an image of the cross, "so that they shall not associate the sign of our faith with their frivolities, but will keep the observation of their rituals free of contempt of the Christian law."[8] Twelve years later the Emperor writes to the praetorian prefect of Illyricum to say that no one shall be oppressed for being a Jew, on the excuse of any religious pretext (provided that he is innocent), and that synagogues and Jewish homes shall not be burned down or damaged. But again the Emperor balances this admonition with an order that such provisions must not lead to Jews becoming insolent or committing anti-Christian acts.[9] A comparable balance is maintained in a ruling of 423 addressed to Asclepiodotus, the praetorian prefect of Oriens: synagogues may not be seized or set on fire; if they have been, or if synagogues have been taken for the benefit of churches, or even dedicated as churches (and if this has happened very recently), new buildings shall be provided; as regards objects dedicated in synagogues, if they have been taken they must be restored, or the price given in lieu. But then the order follows that no new synagogues shall be built, and that existing ones shall remain in their present form.[10]

Shortly after, there followed another ruling, addressed to the same praetorian prefect of Oriens. Preserved only in a series of separate fragments, it evidently legislated in relation to both pagans and heretics, as well as Jews, and again preserves a rhetorical balance as between protection on the one hand and restriction of rights on the other. The surviving section relating to Jews deserves to be quoted:

7. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 12 = Linder (n. 4), no. 25.

8. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 18, trans. Linder (n. 4), no. 36.

9. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 21, *Cod. Just.* 1, 9, 14 = Linder (n. 4), no. 46. The reading and meaning are by no means clear, and in particular it is uncertain what is signified by the word *obteratur*, translated above as "be oppressed."

10. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 25 = Linder (n. 4), no. 47.

THE SAME TWO AUGUSTI TO ASCLEPIODOTUS, PRAEFECTUS PRAETORIO

Known and divulged to all are our decrees and those of our ancestors, in which we suppressed the arrogance and the audacity of the abominable pagans, as well as of the Jews and the heretics. We want the Jews to know, however, that we take with pleasure the occasion of the repetition of the law, and in answer to their pitiful supplications we have but legislated that those who usually commit wrong unadvisedly under cover of the venerable Christianity, shall abstain from injuring and persecuting them, and that from now on no one shall occupy their synagogues, and no one shall set them on fire. However, these Jews shall be condemned to confiscation of property as well so to perpetual exile, if it shall be established that they have circumcised a man of our Faith or ordered him to be circumcised. *And other matters*.

GIVEN ON THE FIFTH DAY BEFORE THE IDES OF APRIL AT CONSTANTINOPLE, IN THE CONSULATE OF ASCLEPIODOTUS AND MARIANUS.[11]

As we will see later, there is clear evidence that this law, or one closely similar to it, was promulgated in Syria and provoked strong hostile reactions among at least some Christians there. In accordance with that, this pronouncement itself reveals the competing pressures which the Emperor felt himself to be under, and is also unique (in the context of Jewish-Christian conflicts) in alluding to the supplications (*preces*) presented by Jews; nothing is indicated as to their geographical location or any communal representative structure by which the petition was generated.

Imperial "legislation"—issued, as stated above, in the form of letters to office-holders—was indeed the product of continuous pressures, resulting in what are often taken to be unavailing repetitions, when in fact they are responses, sometimes varying the terms of previous pronouncements, sometimes instigated by the need for more emphatic exposition of key points. Hence it was only two months later (8 June 423) that Theodosius wrote again to Asclepiodotus on the subject of pagans, heretics, and Jews. Here again, only sections of the original law survive, but one of these contains a reassertion of the protection offered to Jews and their synagogues, while another attests very clearly to communal tensions and violence, in this case directed by Christians against pagans and Jews:

11. *Cod. Theod*. 16, 9, 5 = Linder (n. 4), no. 48, whose translation is used above.

THE SAME TWO AUGUSTI TO ASCLEPIODOTUS, PRAEFECTUS PRAETORIO

After other matters. The Manichaeans and those called Pepyzitae, as well as those worse than all the other heretics in this belief only that they differ from all on the venerable day of Easter, if they persist in the same madness we shall punish by the same punishment, confiscation of property and exile. But this we particularly enjoin on the Christians, genuine as well as false, that they shall not dare to raise their hands, abusing the authority of religion, against peaceful Jews and Pagans who are not attempting anything seditious or unlawful. For if they shall act violently against peaceful people or plunder their property, they shall be charged and compelled to restitute not only what they had plundered, but thrice and fourfold the value of their plunder. Let the governors of the provinces, their offices and the provincials [or, probably, the *principales*] know, that if they permit these to be done, they shall be punished like the perpetrators.[12]

GIVEN ON THE SIXTH DAY BEFORE THE IDES OF JUNE AT CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE CONSULATE OF ASCLEPIODOTUS AND MARIANUS.

Finally, we may note the long pronouncement of Theodosius addressed in 438 to Florentius, the then praetorian prefect of Oriens, in which after abusive references to the blindness of Jews, Samaritans, pagans, and heretics, the Emperor, for the first time in the East, proclaims that Jews and Samaritans are to be debarred from public office.[13] It should be stressed that such a rule had not been promulgated in the East before (though comparable provisions are found earlier in the West),[14] and that it in no way implies that Jewish

12. For the various fragments, see Linder (n. 4), no. 49. The reassertion of protection comes from *Cod. Theod.* 16, 10, 27, and the order to Christians, quoted above in Linder's translation, from *Cod. Theod.* 16, 10, 24.

13. *Nov. Theod.* 3 = Linder (n. 4), no. 54.

14. For limitations on Jewish access to public office in western legislation after 395, see (possibly) *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 16 = Linder (n. 4), no. 33, whose precise scope is not at all clear; *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 24 = Linder (n. 4), no. 45 (March 10, 418); Linder (n. 4), no. 51, of July–August 425, combining *Const. Sirmond.* 6 with *Cod. Theod.* 16, 5, 62 + 16, 2, 46 + 16, 5, 63 + 16, 2, 47 + 16, 5, 64. Issued at Aquileia immediately after the suppression by eastern forces of a usurper, and the proclamation of the child Valentinian III as Emperor in the West (as "Caesar" in October 424, and as "Augustus" in Rome in October 425), this law can in fact be regarded as a product of the policy of Theodosius. All the same, there is no record of the promulgation of its provisions in the East at this moment.

observance was illegal. It does embody an intended, and very significant, limitation on the public roles open to Jews, and by its nature expresses an unquestioning hostility. But the Emperor's position remains that of formal maintenance of the law, and is in no way an example of overt persecution, or of forced conversion.

This brief survey of relevant imperial pronouncements relating to the Greek East, often discussed,[15] is intended to do two things: to illustrate Christian attitudes, as expressed by emperors, whose pronouncements could not by their nature be divorced in tone and context from those of contemporary bishops. If anything, however, for all his proclaimed Christian piety, Theodosius' position was that of attempting to restrain Christian hostility to Jews (but also Jewish hostility to Christians). What needs to be stressed again is that, like late Roman "legislation" in general, these pronouncements, in the form of letters to senior office-holders, are visibly the results of continually conflicting and changing pressures. None of the pronouncements concerned happens to identify a region or locality more precise than the two major Prefectures of Illyricum and Oriens into which the eastern empire was divided (as many other such pronouncements in fact did). But equally there is no specific reason to think of any of them as relating to the three provinces into which Palaestina was now divided. In a general way, they evoke a conception, which other evidence shows to be valid, of uneasy co-existence between Jews and Christians, occasionally breaking out into either ritualised expressions of hostility or actual violence. As it happens, newly published, or newly re-examined, documentary and archaeological material, when taken together with other long-known evidence, some of which could profitably also be re-examined, gives a very powerful impression both of the number of Jewish communities attested in the cities of the Greek East, of the apparently flourishing state of their communal organisation, and, in some cases, of their capacity to attract "God-fearers" (*theosebeis*) or (in one case) full converts (*prosēlytoi*). The number of late Roman Greek cities which have been subject to systematic excavation and analysis is small, so it is striking that at least four of those which have—Sardis, Aphrodisias, Apamea in Syria, and Gerasa—provide very clear evidence of a Jewish presence in the heart of the city. Above all, however, we ought to be conscious, in looking at this evidence, of the vast gulf which separates the situation which obtained in the first three centuries, when both Jewish and Christian communities were minority ele-

15. See, e.g., B. S. Bachrach, "The Jewish Community of the Later Roman Empire as Seen in the *Codex Theodosianus*," in J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs, eds., *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews and "Others" in Late Antiquity* (1985), 399.

ments in a predominantly pagan world, from one in which the institutions and rituals of paganism were under vigorous attack, and in which Judaism represented a (generally) tolerated rival variant of monotheism, living in the threatening shadow of a Christianity which had the full backing of the state. It is precisely this new situation which makes the archaeological and epigraphic evidence for the Jewish communities of the late Empire in the Greek East so striking. It is also in the light of this evidence that the air of hostility, insecurity, and suspicion which pervades Christian writing of the period, as regards Jews, begins to be intelligible.

If the objective were, as in the third volume of Schürer's *History*,[16] to produce a complete survey of the evidence, or possible evidence, for Jewish communities, the procedure would of course be to take the material place by place, and to combine all different types of evidence from different sources. The purpose in this case, however, is different: to look first at the most significant items of "Jewish" evidence, archaeological and documentary, and then to survey the most salient examples of Christian reports which either attest the existence of a Jewish community, or communities, or illuminate the nature of Christian-Jewish contacts, or both. Neither survey sets out to be exhaustive.

The word "Jewish" was placed just now in quote marks, for two reasons. The first is the need to stress the inevitable limitations of the archaeological evidence for synagogues and their iconography, and of the brief epigraphic documents (and one papyrus) produced by or within Jewish communities. There is no Jewish literature which emanates from the diaspora in the Greek East in the late Roman period, and no basis whatsoever for deciding whether the Judaism practised there was or was not identical with that of the late Roman synagogues of Palestine, as known from archaeological evidence, or for determining whether either was close to "rabbinic" Judaism, whatever that term may be held to mean. Hebrew and Aramaic are both much more evident in the documentation from Palestine but (as we will see) are not absolutely unknown in the Greek-speaking diaspora. "Rabbis" as such do appear in the documentary evidence, none precisely dated, from Palestine, but (so far) in the diaspora, paradoxically, only from the Latin West.[17] But the long "talmudic" inscription on mosaic from the synagogue at Rehov, near Scythopolis/Bet-Shean, where the excavations have scandal-

16. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History* III.1 (1986), 1–86.

17. S. J. D. Cohen, "Epigraphic Rabbis," *JQR* 72 (1981–82): 1. See Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions* I (n. 5 above), nos. 22, 36, 86, 183, 186.

ously never been the subject of a final report,[18] shows that it is rash to assert a disjunction between "synagogal" and "rabbinic" Judaism. We do not know.

The second reason for putting "Jewish" in quote marks is Martin Goodman's bold, and deliberately provocative, suggestion that what we normally identify, in particular at Sardis, as a community of Jews, with a meeting place adorned with Jewish symbols, might in fact be a community of gentile "God-fearers" (*theosebeis*).[19] As such, the argument can hardly be refuted. For, short of DNA tests, it will always be systematically impossible to distinguish a community which has fully adopted Jewish customs and beliefs from one which is made up of people who are Jewish by biological descent. We can make this distinction only where they themselves do. Which is why it will be convenient to begin with the evidence from Aphrodisias, which does precisely distinguish *theosebeis* and *prosēlytoi* from the main body of a community which is marked by a high ratio of Hebrew names. Aphrodisias will be the first of a series of examples considered in the next section, taken in approximate order of their significance for this topic. As will be obvious, the evidence for different communities varies very drastically in both type and scale.

Jewish Evidence for Diaspora Communities

Aphrodisias

Our knowledge of the Jewish community of Aphrodisias in Caria depends essentially on a single inscribed block, with substantial texts in Greek on two of its four sides (the synagogue itself may lie under the museum constructed to house the magnificent statues produced in the city). Published originally in an illuminating pioneering study by Joyce Reynolds and Robert Tannenbaum, the two texts have now been re-studied, and a convincing date

18. For a (sadly typical) general interpretative description of the Rehov synagogue, not based on any detailed archaeological report or analysis, see E. Stern, A. Lewisohn-Gilboa, and J. Aviram, eds., *New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Investigations in the Holy Land* IV (1993), 1272–74. In the absence of any properly established archaeological dating, it is not possible to say even in what century the main mosaic inscription was laid down. As a result, what should be the starting point of all serious historical study of "Palestinian" rabbinic Judaism is rendered useless.

19. See M. Goodman, "Jews and Judaism in the Mediterranean Diaspora in the Late-Roman Period: The Limitations of Evidence," *Journ. Med. Stud.* 4 (1994): 208.

established, by Angelos Chaniotis.[20] It is in fact this re-dating, along with the recent publication of all the inscriptions from the synagogue at Sardis, which offers the occasion for a complete re-evaluation of the place of Judaism in the religious map of the late Roman Christian empire in the East. Chaniotis argues that the earlier of the two inscriptions is that which occupies what Reynolds and Tannenbaum had designated as face *b* (and which he labels as face I), and that it is of the fourth century, perhaps between 311 and 379; while that on face *a* (now face II) is later, and will probably belong to the fifth century. The revolutionary implications of the new dating become clear only when we consider the content of the two inscriptions. What we may now call face I contains a list of the names of fifty-four persons in Greek, predominantly in the normal form "x son of y," of which no less than eighteen contain transliterated Hebrew elements (Iakōb, Ioudas, Zacharias, Iōsēph, and so forth). There are also programmatic names indicating adherence to Judaism, such as "Eusabbathios." We can be certain that these are Jews both because of these names and because the next section has a heading indicating that the people listed in it are "God-fearers": "And such as are *theoseb[e]is*" (line 34). There follows a list of fifty-two men, none with Hebrew names (though there is one "Eusabbathios," line 48), of whom the first nine have the status designation "city councillor" (*bouleutēs*), and many of the others have their occupations described.

As soon as we read this document, not as a product of the period when both Christian and Jewish communities lived as tolerated or threatened minorities in an essentially pagan world, but as reflecting the first stage of Christian dominance, it appears in a wholly new light. What is not clear of course is whether the fifty-two gentile "God-fearers" had come from paganism or Christianity (it was the conversion of *Christians* to Judaism which contemporary emperors, at least primarily, sought to ban, and which was subject to penalties on the individual concerned).[21] But, on any construction, it offers a sudden glimpse of religious fluidity in the fourth century, and of an at-

20. J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge Philological Society, supp. vol. 12, 1987); A. Chaniotis, "The Jews of Aphrodisias: New Evidence and Old Problems," *SCI* 21 (2002): 209. See now *IJudO* II, 70ff., nos. 14 (the main inscription)–29.

21. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 7 = *Cod. Just.* 1, 7, 1 = Linder (n. 4), no. 12 (A.D. 353); *Cod. Theod.* 16, 7, 3 = Linder (n. 4), no. 16 (A.D. 383), also penalising Christians who associated themselves with pagan rites or with Manichaeism. *Cod. Theod.* 16, 8, 22 = Linder (n. 4), no. 41 (A.D. 415), among other things penalises any Jew who converts (or circumcises?) a Christian, whether free or slave. Cf. also the enactments of A.D. 423 and 438 quoted in text to nn. 11–13 above.

tractive power of Judaism, for which earlier documentary evidence had not prepared us.

This impression is reinforced by the second inscription, now "face II," and all the more so if, as Chaniotis clearly suggests, it dates after the affirmation of Christianity, and of "Catholic," Trinitarian, belief, by Theodosius I. For here the contributors to some sort of foundation for the relief of the people are listed: of eighteen (or nineteen) individuals,[22] eleven have Hebrew names, including all three of those who are described as *prosēlytos* (e.g., line 22, "Joseph son of Eusebios, proselyte"), while two others each appear as *theoseb(ēs)*. Once again we cannot tell whether either the *theosebeis* or the *prosēlytoi* have come from paganism or from Christianity. But in this phase full proselytes do appear, and give themselves Hebrew names, written in Greek, as they do so. The names (like those of the Jewish group) are written without Greek endings, as they are in the Greek Old Testament, and are not equipped with Greek endings, as in Josephus. This choice implicitly expresses a commitment to Hebrew origins, without proving that knowledge of Hebrew was at all current at Aphrodisias.

Since we do not know where the *stēlē* with the two inscriptions was originally placed, we cannot know how widely it served to advertise the truly remarkable composition of the Jewish community in Aphrodisias. But it is at any rate clear that no effort was made to conceal the adherence either of "God-fearers" or of full proselytes. We may note also the brilliant survey by Chaniotis of the many other public signs of Judaism to be found at Aphrodisias—inscriptions, graffiti, representations of menorahs, and so forth.[23] To repeat, the overall effect of the re-dating is to suggest the need for a radical reconsideration of the place of Judaism in the predominantly Christian Greek empire.

Sardis

The excavations of Sardis in Lydia, as is well known, have revealed that at some point in the late Empire a large basilical hall in the centre of the city—considerably larger than any known building originally constructed as a synagogue—was converted for use by the Jewish community there. The

22. The Samouēl, *presbeutēs*, listed on lines 26–27 is presumably, but not certainly, the same man whose name is added in the margin.

23. See A. Chaniotis, "Zwischen Konfrontation und Interaktion: Christen, Juden und Heiden im spätantiken Aphrodisias," in A. Ackermann and K. E. Müller, eds., *Patchwork: Dimensionen multikulturellen Gesellschaften* (2002), 83.

precise date of this step is currently under debate, and it is a matter of choice whether one describes the resultant building as a synagogue or, more loosely, as a hall with forecourt, now adapted for Jewish communal use.[24] Equally, as above, we cannot prove whether these observers of Judaism were biologically Jewish or not. Doubts must still remain on the archaeological context, since much depends on the dating of the mosaic floor, on which the final report is yet to appear. So, given the uncertainties as to the date, it is not claimed here that the relevant evidence dates to the Theodosian period, though it belongs without question to the late Empire. But the very important step which has very recently been taken is the publication, as two complete groups, of all of the seventy Greek inscriptions and five Hebrew ones from the site, plus one Hebrew one from elsewhere in Sardis. The Greek inscriptions offer an illuminating contrast and comparison to the two from Aphrodisias.[25] Firstly, while much more numerous, they are individually much shorter than the Aphrodisias ones. Secondly, they are all internal to the hall and its forecourt; some are mosaic inscriptions from the main floor, and some come from decorative wall panels. Thirdly, our conception of the community has to be built up from a large number of small texts, some very fragmentary; there is no continuous list, as at Aphrodisias. The overall picture revealed, however, is very much in accordance with that from Aphrodisias. Firstly, individuals with the status designation of *boul(eutēs)*, "city councillor," appear quite frequently (nos. 3, 13, 16, 17?, 24, 25, 26, 31, 37, 67). Secondly, several persons are identified by the term *theosebēs*, "God-fearer" (nos. 8, 9, 22, 59, 66)—surely a conclusive demonstration that we cannot characterise the *whole* community here (or, of course, at Aphrodisias) as "God-fearers." Thirdly, we do encounter some Hebrew names written in Greek, though far fewer than at Aphrodisias (e.g., no. 34: Samō[ēl], someone from the nearby city of Hypaipa; also no. 56: Samō[ēl]).

More important, there are also a few inscriptions which give at least some explicit hints as to the nature of the Judaism practised there: for example, no. 76, a dedicatory inscription ending "Lord, help this house," inscribed in a circle enclosing also a representation of a menorah and an ethrog; also no. 66—"Aurelius Hermogenes, a 'God-fearer,' having taken a vow, made,

24. For the most systematic accounts so far available, see A. R. Seager, "The Building History of the Sardis Synagogue," *Am. Journ. Arch.* 76 (1972): 425; A. R. Seager and A. T. Kraabel, "The Synagogue and the Jewish Community," in G. M. A. Hanfmann, ed., *Sardis from Prehistoric to Roman Times: Results of the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, 1958–1975* (1983), 169.

25. See J. H. Kroll, "The Greek Inscriptions of the Sardis Synagogue," *Harv. Th. Rev.* 94 (2001): 5. See now *IJudO* II, 209ff., nos. 53–145.

from the gifts of Providence, the menorah [*heptamyxion*]." Most significant of all is surely the mosaic inscription (no. 4) with "Vow [*euchē*] of [S]amoe, priest [*hiereus*] and *sophodidaskalos*." It is a matter of speculation what, if any, were the special functions of a *cohen* in a diaspora synagogue in this period. But the concept of a "sophodisdaskalos," even if we clearly cannot just translate it as "rabbi," does hint strongly at an interpretative and expository function, which there is no reason to suppose to have been wholly distinct from the communal functions performed by rabbis.

The feature which is most striking about the Jewish presence in Sardis, however, is the small scatter of Hebrew inscriptions. Of the six known texts, recently published by F. M. Cross,[26] five come from the synagogue itself and are very brief, consisting of a single word or name each; they thus hardly attest to the currency of any real literacy in Hebrew among the community. But the sixth, a stray find from near the temple of Artemis, is a grammatical sentence, using a verb in the perfect tense: 'NY SMRH BN LYHW KTBTY ("I, SMRH son of LYHW, have written"). Its possible implications are therefore quite considerable.

The potential significance of the Sardis synagogue is therefore very great, limited for the moment only by uncertainty as to when the basilical hall was acquired for Jewish use, and as to the time span to which we should attribute the inscriptions. The presence of Hebrew might itself tend to suggest a late date.

Antinoopolis, Egypt

No such problem of dating attaches to the unique papyrus document now in Köln, which attests to the existence of a Jewish community at Antinoopolis, or Antinoe, in middle Egypt, situated on the Nile some 400 kilometres south of Alexandria. This is a marriage contract (*ketubba*) written in Aramaic, and dated at the top (in Greek written in the Hebrew alphabet) to the year A.D. 417.[27] In it Samuel son of Sampati, resident at Antinoopolis, declares that he is taking Metra, daughter of L'ZR from Alexandria as his wife "according to the law (NMWS = *nomos*) [of all the daughters] of Israel" (line 8).

This document has attracted far less comment than it ought to have, since its publication in 1986, perhaps precisely because of its unique character, which necessarily makes it difficult to put in context. The document is full of

26. F. M. Cross, "The Hebrew Inscriptions from Sardis," *Harv. Th. Rev.* 95 (2002): 3.

27. C. Sirat, P. Cauderlier, M. Dukan, and M. A. Friedmann, *La Ketuba de Cologne: un contrat de marriage juif à Antinoopolis* (1986).

Greek loan-words (even beyond the transliterated Greek at the beginning), and gives the impression of representing the language of everyday use in a multi-lingual environment.[28] The editors suggest that the Aramaic used is close to Palestinian Aramaic—hardly surprising, above all in a Jewish context, since what other varieties of fifth-century Aramaic dialects (other than Syriac itself, written in a different script) are available for comparison? There is however nothing in the way that the parties to the contract are described to suggest that they are recent immigrants from Palestine.

The composition of a Jewish marriage contract in Aramaic suggests, against what would surely have been the general expectation, namely the use of Greek, that it was possible for there to be diaspora communities where the knowledge of Aramaic (or Hebrew) had not been lost, and where Jewish law was consciously observed. The composition of such a marriage contract, even though no explicit reference to a Jewish community or its institutions appears in the document, clearly implies that that there was such a community. Once again presumptions as to a clear distinction between "native" Palestinian Judaism and diaspora Judaism may need to be re-thought.

Gerasa, Province of Arabia

One of the most striking items to emerge from the major excavations at Gerasa (Jerash) in Jordan was the foundations and partially preserved mosaic floor of a synagogue, directly overlaid by a church which was built, as an inscription records, in A.D. 530/1.[29] This is one of several known cases of such overlying, as we will see. As regards the synagogue, situated on high ground to the west of the famous temple of Artemis, the excavators suggest that it may have been constructed in the late fourth or early fifth century. If we conceive of it as a diaspora synagogue, it has very distinctive features: the mosaic floor contained a pictorial, or narrative, depiction of a biblical scene, with the dove bringing an olive branch to two sons of Noah, who are named in Greek, Shem (*Sēm*) and Yaphet (*Iaphith*), and then a representation of the animals leaving the Ark. A further Greek inscription in mosaic reads "To

28. For a list of transliterated Greek words (the dating formula, titles, names, place-names, weights, and objects), see Sirat et al. (n. 27), 71–72.

29. See C. H. Kraeling, ed., *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis* (1938). See pp. 234–41, "The Synagogue Church," with inscription no. 323 (p. 483), giving the year 593 of the era of Gerasa. For the synagogue mosaic, see pp. 318–23, with the mosaic inscriptions nos. 285–87 (p. 473). The mosaics of both synagogue and church are beautifully presented and discussed in M. Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (1992), 290–91. For a succinct and useful account, see L. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue* (2000), 239–40. Not in *IJudO*.

[the] holy place [*agios topos*]. Amen. Sela. [The] peace of the synagogue." A closely parallel text is offered by an Aramaic inscription in the mosaic floor, reading "Peace on all Israel. Amen. Amen. Selah," and giving three names, presumably of benefactors: Phinehas son of Baruch, Yose son of Shmuel, and Yudan son of Hezekiah.

There is of course a question as to whether this synagogue should be classified with other diaspora ones or with those of Palestine. Scythopolis, in the province of Palestina Secunda, with several late Roman synagogues in the city and its territory, lay some forty-eight kilometres to the north-west, across the deep valley of the Jordan;[30] and Hammath-Gader, with both elaborate baths and another late Roman synagogue with extensive Aramaic inscriptions, was some fifty-five kilometres to the north-north-west, near the south-east corner of the Sea of Galilee.[31] So Gerasa lay not far from the principal zone of Jewish settlement, though in this area it was a matter of mixed settlement, not Jewish alone. But that should not be enough to make us categorise it as a "Palestinian" or "Judaean" synagogue, which strictly it was not; instead, it should be taken as another sign that too rigid a distinction should not be presupposed. In any case, as we will see later (text following n. 53 below), a Christian writer of the early fifth century can presume that Jewish and Samaritan synagogues might be found anywhere along the route which led through the Near Eastern provinces from Cilicia to Egypt.

Apamea, Syria

Just as Gerasa does, the major Greek city of Apamea on the Orontes reveals a Jewish synagogue of the late Roman period which was subsequently overlaid directly by a Christian church. Unlike almost all the other documents discussed here, two of the sixteen mosaic inscriptions from the synagogue at Apamea carry a precise date, year 703 of the Seleucid era, so A.D. 391/2.[32]

30. For the synagogues of Scythopolis, see E. Stern et al. (n. 18), 223–34. For a fine analysis of the evolution of the city in the late Roman period, see Y. Tsafrir and G. Foerster, "Urbanism at Scythopolis–Bet Shean in the Fourth to Seventh Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997): 85.

31. For the best introduction to the site of Hammat Gader, see Y. Hirschfeld, ed., *The Roman Baths of Hammat Gader* (1997). The synagogue is thought to date to the early fifth century, and reveals four quite substantial inscriptions in Aramaic, all recording the names of benefactors. As a famous place of resort, producing also extensive Greek inscriptions, Hammat Gader was plainly a place of mixed culture.

32. The inscriptions are *CIJ* II, nos. 803–18; the dated texts are nos. 803 and 805. See also, for all these texts, *Ins. Gr. et Lat. de la Syrie* IV, nos. 1319–37, and for a selection B. Lifshitz,

All the inscriptions are in Greek, and the mosaic floor exhibits only abstract designs, with only the most formal representational elements.[33] The function of the inscriptions is in essence to record the names of the benefactors who had paid for sections of the mosaic floor, but between them these texts are also notable for giving so full a list of synagogue officials: *archisynagogoi*, a *gerousiarchos*, *presbyteroi*, and a *hazzan* or *diakonos* (*CIJ* II 805: "in the time of Nemias [Nehemiah], the *hazzan* [who was also] the deacon," so in *IJudO* III, no. Syr 58). There seems no reason to posit any substantial gap in time in the laying of the various sections of the floor mosaic, so we can take this as a snapshot of the community as it was at the end of the fourth century. "Azzana" must surely be a transliteration of the Hebrew ḤZN, or more probably Aramaic HZN'. Naturally, this is no proof of the currency of either Hebrew or Aramaic in the community at Apamea. But neither the Hebrew nor the Aramaic form of the word is found in the Bible, so the word as transliterated into Greek must reflect the subsequent evolution of communal practice. The equivalence in meaning of the two terms, *hazzan* and *diakonos*, with the Greek in a slightly different form, is attested by Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30, 11: "of [the] *hazzanitai*, that is, in translation the *diakonoi* or assistant servants among them."

Antioch, Syria

By accident, two of the mosaic inscriptions from Apamea (*CIJ* II, nos. 803–4 = *IJudO* III, nos. Syr 53–54) record that sections of the mosaic floor there had been paid for by Ilasios son of Eisakios, *archisynagogos* of the Antiochenes. As we will see later, the Jewish community of Antioch was the source of considerable anxiety to one contemporary presbyter there, the later bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom (see text to n. 40 below).

Side, Pamphylia

Two Greek inscriptions, which seem to date to the second half of the fourth century A.D. or the first half of the fifth century, clearly attest the existence of an organised Jewish community, and (it seems) of more than one syna-

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Donateurs et fondateurs dans les synagogues juives (1967), nos. 30–36. See now *IJudO* III, 84ff., nos. Syr 53–71 (with photos of some texts).

33. Reproductions of the synagogue mosaics are extremely hard to find, but see V. Verhoogen, *Apamée de Syrie aux Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire* (1964), pls. 15–17. See also Levine (n. 29), 240–42.

gogue, since the second inscription speaks of "the first synagogue."[34] The first names Leontios, son of Iakob, and the second Isaki(os), who was curator "of the most holy first synagogue," and who completed the marble paving from the *ambo* to the *sēmma* (*simma*, or *sigma*) and saw to the cleaning of the two seven-branched (*heptamyxoi*) candlesticks (approximately as in Sardis). Even without further data, we catch a glimpse of the context of communal Jewish religious life in the Theodosian age.

This survey has been concerned only to highlight some particularly significant concentrations of evidence, revealing either the physical character of diaspora synagogues or their communal organisation, or features of religious life. It has left aside a large range of other evidence which may or may not date to the Theodosian period, or which merely attests the presence of individual Jews (e.g., the Oxyrhynchus papyrus of A.D. 400 which shows the lease of a house by two nuns there from a man named Aurelios Iosē son of Ioudas, identified as a Jew, *Ioudaios*).[35] But the evidence listed above, scattered as it is, is perhaps sufficient to suggest why the presence of Jewish communities, exhibiting a form of monotheism involving a different form of attachment to the Old Testament, and a rejection of the New, played so large a part in the consciousness of their Christian contemporaries, who apparently enjoyed an unchallenged dominance. The evidence of Christian sources will show that communal aggression was not confined to the Christian side, though it is more fully attested there, and that on the whole the emperors and the secular authorities, rather than promoting anything which came close to persecution, tried to impose restraint, on both sides.

Jews and Jewish Communities as Represented in Christian Writers

Christian evidence reveals very clearly why restraint by the civil or military authorities might well be necessary. For instance, the Syriac *acta* of the second Council of Ephesus in 449 record an element in the accusations brought against Sophronius, the bishop of Tella (Constantina) in Osrhoene. His son was alleged to have taken a Jew with him into the bishop's house there and to have eaten with him "in the manner of the Jews." During the Lenten fast

34. For the fullest treatment, see J. Nollé, *Side im Altertum: Geschichte und Zeugnisse* (*Inschriften Griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 44, 2001) II, nos. 190–91 (pp. 511–19). See *IJudO* II, 462ff., 219–20.

35. *P. Oxy*. XLIV, no. 3203.

he had continued to eat with the same Jew and had even brought him into the church. But he had then been driven out by a Christian mob and had appealed for protection to the commander (*dux*) of the *praetorium* there, who called out his troops, leading to the death and injury of many Christians. This was one of the causes of complaint brought against various bishops who were thought to be followers of Nestorius.[36] On the other hand, the sixth-century *Chronicle of Edessa*, also in Syriac, claims both that Rabbula, as soon as he was elected bishop of Edessa in 412, had built a church on the site of a former synagogue, and that this had been by imperial command.[37] The brief entry in the *Chronicle* does not make clear whether the synagogue had still been in use up to the point when the church was built. An independent source, the Syriac *Life* of Rabbula, probably of the fifth century, and not later than the sixth, claims that the bishop converted "thousands" of Jews and heretics, and destroyed the churches of the latter.[38] We need not accept that there were literally thousands of Jews to convert, but all the evidence supports the conception of Osrhoene in this period as the scene of much variation and conflict both within Christianity and as between Christians and other groups.

If we could have confidence in the historicity of the picture offered by the Syriac *Life* of the famous archimandrite (in effect, abbot of a monastery), Bar Sauma, also partially edited by F. Nau—and perhaps, following E. Honigmann, dating from about A.D. 550–650—we would gain an even more powerful impression than from other sources both of Christian anxiety and of violent communal conflict.[39] Looking back to the period around A.D. 400, the author envisages a world which seems extremely strange in the light of the majority of our evidence: a Near East (Palestine, Phoenicia,

36. For the Syriac *acta*, see J. P. G. Flemming, *Akten der Ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449* (*Abh. d. Kön. Ges. der Wiss. zu Göttingen*, Phil.-hist. Kl., N.F. XV, 1917). For this episode, see pp. 82–85. The text had been translated into English by S. W. F. Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus* (1881), 196–97.

37. For the *Chronicle*, see L. Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die Edessenische Chronik* (*Texte u. Untersuchungen* IX, 1892), para. LI (text and German translation); also I. Guidi, ed., *CSCO, Scriptores Syri* III.4 (1903), 1–11.

38. For the *Life* of Rabbula, see the extracts published and translated by F. Nau in *Rev. Hist. Relig.* 103 (1931): 97, and the fine analysis by G. W. Bowersock, "The Syriac Life of Rabbula and Syrian Hellenism," in T. Hägg and Ph. Rousseau, eds., *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (2000), 255.

39. See the extracts edited by F. Nau in *Rev. Or. Chr.* 18 (1913): 272 and 379; 19 (1914): 113 and 278, also *Rev. Ét. Juives* 83 (1927): 184. For a discussion, in essence sceptical, of the authenticity of the *Life* as a source for events in the Theodosian period, see E. Honigmann, *Le couvent de Barsauma et le Patriarchat jacobite d'Antioche et de Syrie* (1954), chap. 2.

Arabia) where pagans were numerous and Christians few, and where Jews and Samaritans were dominant and persecuted the Christians. Accordingly, the hero of the biography set out with his followers to destroy the synagogues of the Jews, the meeting places of the Samaritans, and pagan temples. In particular, a vivid account is provided of a pitched battle over the grand Jewish synagogue of Rabbath-Moab (Areopolis), which is finally occupied and burnt. A judgement on whether any of this really happened must await a full edition and study of the text.

We are on firmer ground when we come to the eight homilies of John Chrysostom "Against the Jews" which he delivered while he was a presbyter at Antioch in A.D. 388–97/8.[40] It will be recalled that this is exactly the moment at which Ilasios, "archisynagogos of the Antiochenes," was commemorated at Apamea as donor of part of the mosaic floor of the synagogue there. In fact, in delivering his homilies "Against the Jews" Chrysostom was not, strictly speaking, denouncing Jews, or "Jewish-Christians" or even "Judaising Christians" as a coherent group, but normal members of the Christian congregation of Antioch, whom he observed to be attracted to the service of the synagogue, and in particular to the observance of Passover and of the Autumnal High Festivals: New Year (marked by trumpets), the Day of Atonement (and a fast which is apparently that covering the ten-day period between them), and Tabernacles. Addressed directly to members of the main Christian congregation of Antioch, John's discourses also represent violent theological diatribes against any claim that the Bible provided material which offered a justification for continued observation of Judaism.

From just the same period, A.D. 388, we catch another glimpse of communal conflicts in the Near East in the famous letter of Ambrose (*Ep.* 1, 40) to Theodosius I about the affair of the synagogue at Callinicum on the Euphrates. The pattern of communal relations matches exactly that which we can read between the lines of the imperial pronouncements of the 420s. The synagogue had been burnt down on the initiative of the local bishop; a report had been sent to the Emperor by an official whom Ambrose describes as "comes Orientis militarium partium" (in fact *either* the civilian *Comes Orientis* [Count of the Orient] or the *Magister militum* [Master of the Soldiers] *per Orientem*); the Emperor had ordered the punishment of others

40. See above all R. L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late 4th Century* (1983). Note also W. A. Meeks and R. L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* (1978), with translations of *Discourses* I and VIII, and P. W. Harkins, *Saint John Chrysostom, Discourses against Judaising Christians* (Fathers of the Church 68, 1979).

involved, while the bishop was to be responsible for re-building the synagogue. Ambrose protests violently, just as Symeon Stylites is alleged to have done in similar circumstances (text to n. 46 below). Moreover, he recalls instances of Jewish violence against Christians, unleashed in the reign of Julian the Apostate (1, 40, 15), as well as Julian's plan to re-build the Temple (1, 40, 12).

Paulinus' *Life of Ambrose* (22, 3) adds some clarification. The Christian assault, which was also directed against a meeting place of the heretical group known as Valentinians, was occasioned by abuse of some monks by either the Jews or the Valentinians. Moreover, Ambrose's protest was backed up by his refusal to admit the Emperor to communion until the orders given had been reversed.

This notorious episode has inevitably been discussed many times, and we need do no more here than note that it adds another small city in the Near East where there was a Jewish community and a synagogue, and acutely hostile relations between different religious groups living side-by-side; it also shows that the imperial state attempted at least to deal justly between them.

A similar impression of communal religious rivalry at Antioch is provided by Theodoret, who had been born there in 393 and was bishop of Cyrrhus from 423 onwards. As regards both cities, he sees Christianity as functioning within a hostile and contested environment, in which Jews play a significant part. For instance, speaking of the successful tenure of the See of Antioch by bishop Alexander (A.D. 414/24), he says that the Arians and Jews were crippled, and the remnants of the pagans groaned, "seeing the other rivers pouring into the sea of the Church" (*HE* 5, 35, 5). In his conception of his own tenure of the See of Cyrrhus, it too had been an endless battle against heresy, Judaism, and paganism (*Ep.* 2, 81, written in 448). A year later, writing to Pope Leo in Rome, he speaks more generally of the contests (*agōnes*) in the cities of the secular diocese of Oriens, against pagans, Jews, and heretics, as well as the Persian magi (*Ep.* 3, 113). It was probably about this time, when deposed from his See by the second Council of Ephesus of 449, that he wrote in another letter that while pagans, Jews, and heretics of all sorts were at peace, the church was buffeted by storms (*Ep.* 3, 129). Even before that, when he had merely been ordered, by imperial command, not to leave his own city, he had written to the *Magister Militum*, Anatolius, that he could not refrain from weeping on seeing the Jews "raising their horn on high," at the sight of dissension in the church (*Ep.* 2, 79). We shall encounter again this sense of the Jews as an ever-present hostile chorus, despairing at Christian success and rejoicing at difficulties. And beyond that we need to recall

the very specific report from Iohannes of Antioch with which we began, of Jews publicly beating an archdeacon in Laodicea in the city's theatre.

Theodoret's writings reveal two other important aspects of the Christian conceptualisation of contemporary Judaism. One is the shock which had been caused by the abortive attempt of the emperor Julian (A.D. 361/3) to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, and thus re-establish a bond between Judaism and paganism, namely animal sacrifice, which necessarily excluded Christians. As we have seen, this topic had been a significant theme also for John Chrysostom. Theodoret comes to it, for instance, in the course of his *Commentary on Ezekiel*, referring to a Christian theologian, Apollinarius, who had predicted the re-building of Jerusalem and the re-instatement of sacrifice under Jewish law, and had said that there would be two parallel churches, one observing the Jewish Law, and the other not. But what then of the churches in Jerusalem if the Temple were to be re-built?[41]

Perhaps more striking still is Theodoret's observation in his *Questions on Genesis* that Jewish boys are distinctive in not growing up from infancy using their native language, Hebrew, but rather the language of those among whom they live. Learning the Hebrew alphabet comes when they are adolescent: "through these letters they read Holy Scripture, which is written in Hebrew."[42] He cannot be basing this observation on the Jewish community of Palestine, with which he had in any case little or no known contact. So it must be a reference to the diaspora of Syria and Euphratesia, with which he was familiar. What is striking is the assumption that Hebrew instruction did exist among Jewish communities there, and that its object was the study of the Bible in Hebrew. He does not make clear whether he thinks of the normal language of the wider environment as being Greek or Aramaic/Syriac, but the former is by far the most likely. As regards the presumed contrast between Palestinian and diaspora Judaism, it is quite clear that Greek was current also among Jews in Palestine, and was used regularly, along with Hebrew and Aramaic, in the mosaic inscriptions of synagogues.[43] Moreover, it

41. *Com. Ezek.* 48:35 (*PG* LXXXI, cols. 1248 and 1253).

42. *Qu. in Gen.* 10, *Qu.* 61 (*PG* LXXX, col. 165).

43. There is to my knowledge no serious study of the Greek used in Palestinian synagogue inscriptions. See now L. Roth-Gerson, *The Greek Inscriptions from the Synagogues in Eretz Israel* (1987, Hebrew). For a collection of one category of the evidence, see A. Ovadiah, *Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Mosaic Pavements in Israel* (1987), and for the mixture of languages among all the religious communities of Palestine, see F. Millar, "Ethnic Identity in the Roman Near East, AD 325–450: Language, Religion and Culture," *Mediterranean Archaeology* 11 (1998): 159 (= chapter 15 of the present volume).

is quite clear from a letter of Jerome, written from Bethlehem in about the first year of the reign of Theodosius II (*Ep.* 121, 10, 19–21), that the informants who talked to him about "rabbinic" Judaism had spoken to him about it in Greek.

As regards the range of Theodoret's knowledge and attitudes, it might be noted that he would deserve re-consideration in the light of Alison Salvesen's brilliant recent survey of Christian attitudes to the Hebrew Bible, and the two conspicuous cases of a return to it, by Origen and Jerome.[44] For it is a noteworthy feature of his biblical commentaries that he on occasion refers to readings current "among the Hebrews and among the Syrians." So he is aware of both Hebrew and Syriac texts of the Bible.[45]

Once again, though there clearly was a significant contrast between Holy Land and diaspora, the difference was one of degrees, and there is no basis for the assumption of a fundamental division. We do not know what level of knowledge of the Hebrew Bible lay behind the very modest epigraphic traces of Hebrew in the diaspora. But it is worth noting that, long before he settled in Bethlehem, Jerome, while following an ascetic life on the fringes of the desert near Chalcis in Syria in the 370s, had studied Hebrew with a converted Jew, presumably coming from that area (*Ep.* 125, 12). Equally, we cannot claim to know that no compositions of a "rabbinic" type circulated in the diaspora. Nor indeed do we know that none were written there. What is clear, as we will see, is that views on the interpretation of the Bible could be formed and expressed there, and also expressed to Christians with whom diaspora Jews had contact.

Returning to Theodoret's real-life observations, in his *Historia Religiosa*, recording the major examples of asceticism in Syria, he notes for instance the conversion of some Jews who had got lost in the Syrian desert, by a fourth-century holy man who lived the life of a solitary there, Symeon the Elder (*HR* 6). He also describes in more detail the influential role played by the most famous of his holy men, his own contemporary, Symeon Stylites, in confronting pagan impiety and Jewish audacity, as well as dispersing bands of heretics; sometimes Symeon wrote to the Emperor (Theodosius II) on these topics, and sometimes he stimulated lower officials into action (*HR* 26,

44. A. Salvesen, "A Convergence of the Ways? The Judaizing of Christian Scripture by Origen and Jerome," in A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (2002), 233.

45. This question cannot be pursued here. But note, e.g., *Praef. in Libros Regnorum* (*PG* LXXX, col. 1447); 11:13 (col. 1512); *Com. in Osee* 2:15 (LXXXI, col. 1564): "the *Achōr* I have found [written] *Achar* in Syriac."

27). This latter theme is taken up in much more detail in the Syriac *Life of Symeon*, written in the mid-fifth century, which quotes, naturally in Syriac translation, what is claimed to be a vigorously phrased letter from Symeon to the Emperor, complaining of undue favour to the Jews. According to this account, which is later followed by Evagrius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, the Emperor at once countermanded his orders and dismissed the official concerned.[46] These or comparable exchanges lie behind the awkward balancing act which we saw earlier being performed in the imperial pronouncements of the 420s (text to nn. 11–12 above).

A different, but very significant, set of view-points on Jewish-Christian relations is provided by the *Ecclesiastical History* of Theodoret's direct contemporary, Socrates. He was a layman, not a bishop, and seems to have written in Constantinople. Alone of the major church historians of Theodosius' time, he carried on his narrative up to the second-to-last decade of the reign, stopping in 439, and thus continued long enough to cover the first stage of the Nestorian controversy.[47]

As regards Socrates' contribution to "the Jewish question," as seen by Christians, we may note in passing his long excursus, beginning from the issue of the date of Easter, concerned with the influence of Judaism on the practices of the church (*EH* 5, 22). More specific are his three detailed reports of episodes from the reign of Theodosius II, all, obviously enough, presented from a Christian point of view. First in time comes the well-known account of major Jewish-Christian communal conflicts in Alexandria in 415 (*EH* 7, 13–14). To abbreviate drastically, conflicts arose over the presence of Jews, at leisure during the Sabbath, at a public show of dancers, attended by the praefectus Augustalis (the prefect of Egypt), Orestes. When a confidant of the patriarch, the famous theologian Cyril, was publicly abused by the Jews present, Orestes responded by having him beaten. Cyril then summoned the leaders of the Jewish community and threatened them.

In response, so Socrates' account runs, the Jews formed a plot to burn down a church in Alexandria, and, when Christians rushed to save it, assaulted them and killed some. In his turn Cyril assembled a large force of Christian supporters, attacked the synagogues, killed some Jews and drove

46. Syriac *Life*, chaps. 130–32 Hilgenfeld/121–23 Doran. For a German translation, see H. Lietzmann et al., eds., *Das Leben des Heiligen Symeon Stylites* (*Texte u. Untersuchungen* XXXII.4, 1908), 79–80 (trans. H. Hilgenfeld). English translation by R. Doran, *The Lives of Symeon Stylites* (Cistercian Studies 112, 1992). Cf. Evagrius, *HE* 1, 13.

47. On Socrates, see Th. Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople: Historian of Church and State* (1997).

out the others. We have very little background against which to set this narrative and can only stress that it presupposes both a substantial (if quite unquantifiable) Jewish presence in the city, with more than one synagogue, and with sufficient confidence to involve the support of the praefectus, and to plan violent action against the Christian majority.[48] Of the religious character of "Alexandrian Judaism" in this period we know nothing more; but it is very clear from the writings of Cyril that the confrontation with Judaism (which in itself did not require or imply any direct contact with Jews) was a significant element in his thought, explored long since in a major early work by R. L. Wilken.[49]

Before we move on to the second two episodes recorded by Socrates, it will be relevant to note that two other Christian writers provide quite vivid side-lights, if not on Alexandrian Judaism as such, at any rate on the Jewish presence in the secular diocese of Egypt (the sphere of responsibility of the praefectus Augustalis), covering both the various provinces into which Egypt was divided, and the two provinces of Libya. One such side-light is provided by the well-known letter of Synesius (*Ep*. 5), dating to A.D. 407, before his election as bishop of Ptolemais, and describing a sea voyage from Alexandria along the coast to Libya. Of the crew of thirteen, including the pilot, more than half were Jews, "a treacherous race, and deeply convinced that piety consisted in causing the death of as many Greeks as possible." During the voyage, a storm broke out, and the Jewish crewmen were not available to lend a hand. For it was the day before the Sabbath (*Paraskeuē*), "and they count the night as belonging to the day which follows, during which they do not think it right to engage in any physical activity." It then appeared that the pilot was himself an observant Jew, and Synesius expostulates on the hopelessness of a situation where the pilot himself was a "teacher of the law" (*nomodidaskalos*—we may recall the *sophodidaskalos* from Sardis), who instead of steering took to reading the Bible. Eventually, under threat of force, the pilot remembered the rule that the preservation of life took precedence over the observation of the Sabbath.

Synesius' tone is satirical—the voyage is represented as a succession of disasters—so we need not take it that the Jewish pilot literally occupied some religious office. The implication is rather that he perversely adopted a role of this sort to the neglect of his immediate duties. All the same, the

48. See, however, C. Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (1997), chaps. 4 and 9.

49. R. L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind: A Study of Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis and Theology* (1971).

word *nomodidaskalos* indicates an awareness on the part of the gentile outsider that the teaching of the Law was a characteristic function of a Jewish community.

As in almost all of our Christian evidence, a consciousness of the presence of Jews in the social and religious spectrum goes together here with an unabashed hostility. We see this conjunction in a different light again in a number of letters from the vast surviving correspondence of Isidorus of Pelusium in the Egyptian delta. He was apparently a presbyter and monk there, writing in the first half of the fifth century.[50] What is striking in this context is the number of allusions to explicit Christian-Jewish argument, and theological dispute. On occasion, the allusions are unspecific—possible disputes over the doctrine of the Trinity against Sabellians, or Jews on the one hand, and Arians or Eunomians or pagans on the other (*Ep.* 3, 27); or he advises a *scholasticus* named Theodosius to use his sharp tongue against the madness of the heretics, the superstition of the pagans, or the ignorance of the Jews (5, 119 = Evieux [n. 50], no. 1386). But most of the relevant letters envisage, or respond to, specific disputes conducted by named individuals. One Adamantius is told to refute the Jew who has been claiming that the notion of the Incarnation has no biblical foundation, by pointing to the creation of Eve from Adam's rib, and of Adam from the earth (1, 141). Isidorus also writes directly to a Jew named Benjamin who claims that sacrifice requires blood, and hence that the use of bread for communion is improper, pointing to the table of Shewbread in the Temple (1, 401). To Athanasius, a presbyter, to whom a Jew has claimed that one must keep only to the literal text of the Bible, Isidorus points to the retelling of the biblical narrative by Philo and Josephus, with the one's use of allegory and the other's of extended exposition (3, 19). Another correspondent is a *grammaticus*, Ophelius, who is in dispute with a Jew over the interpretation of Deuteronomy 18:15, "God will raise up a prophet for you" (3, 22); and yet another is a bishop, also called Isidorus, who is involved in an argument with a Jew on the still extremely acute problem mentioned above: did the Bible offer any justification for the view that the Temple would be restored, or was the situation of Jews on earth in irrevocable decline? Haggai 2:7–8, at any rate, could be shown to offer no

50. For the correspondence, in five books, with 2,102 letters in all, see *PG* LXXVIII, cols. 177–1046. For a modern study, see P. Evieux, *Isidore de Péluse* (1995), and for an edition and translation of (so far) nearly 500 of the letters, P. Evieux, *Isidore de Péluse, Lettres* I: *nos. 1214–1413*, and II: *nos. 1414–1700* (*Sources Chrétiennes* 422, 1997, and 454, 2000). Note that Migne, as cited above, uses a division by book and number, while Evieux's edition deploys the continuous numeration found in some manuscripts.

comfort to the Jews: it referred to the coming building of the Second Temple (4, 17).

There is nothing to indicate, and no reason to believe, that these exchanges took place in any language other than Greek. Nor, though we can assume that Isidorus himself remained always in Pelusium (and many of his letters duly refer to affairs in the Egyptian province of Augustamnica I), can we locate any of these correspondents; it is, however, a reasonable working assumption that the Jews addressed or referred to will have been in Egypt. What emerges is that Christian belief and biblical interpretation were known to be under challenge, and not merely in an abstract sense, relating to different written, or traditional, interpretations, but in the concrete sense of specific personal disputes. Once again we see how the contemporary religious scene was marked by overt rivalries.

If we return from this excursus, related to Socrates' account of violent Jewish-Christian clashes in Alexandria, we come to his equally well-known, if brief and enigmatic, report of an episode which he places shortly after that at Alexandria, hence in the middle of the second decade of the century, which took place at a locality apparently called "Immonmestar" or "Inmestar" (surely in fact Immae?), situated between Chalcis and Antioch in Syria. The context must at any rate be a village or small town. The Jews there were alleged to have drunkenly abused both the Cross and the Christians who rested their hopes on the crucified one. They had then taken a Christian boy and crucified him, and subsequently tortured him to death. Clashes between them and the local Christians then resulted, the authorities were informed, and the Jews were tried and condemned (*EH* 7, 16).

It would be futile to speculate on the truth of this episode, just as it is with the last of the narratives concerning Jews which Socrates presents. According to this story, set in the 430s, a deceiver, or false prophet, named Moses persuaded the Jews of Crete that he was a reincarnation of the biblical Moses, sent from Heaven to lead them across the sea, just as he had over the Red Sea. He preached this message for a whole year in the cities of the island, and persuaded the Jews to believe him, urged them to abandon their wealth and possessions, and promised to lead them dry across the sea to the Promised Land. On the appointed day he led them to the shore, and urged them to enter the water. Many died, and more would have done so, if Christian fishermen and traders had not rescued them. The false Moses vanished, and many of the Jews of Crete abandoned Judaism and converted to Christianity (*EH* 7, 38).

The prejudicial nature of this outsider's narrative is obvious; but it could not have been told if there had been no Jews on Crete, and if their attach-

ment to the Bible and hope of the Promised Land were not known. It also reflects the universal assumption that the conversion of Jews was desirable, neither obligatory on the one hand nor ruled out on racial grounds on the other. There we must leave the story.

Given profound uncertainties about authenticity and attribution,[51] we may merely note a letter attributed to Nilus of Ancyra, addressed to a Samaritan, on biblical interpretation (*Ep.* 3, 116) and another group of letters, to a different Samaritan, on the Resurrection (1, 109–13), and as well as a further one to a Jew named Benjamin on the Sabbath (1, 124). Another refers to the claim being made by a Jew that the loss of Palestine had been due to crimes other than the Crucifixion itself (1, 57).

Finally, we may note that the perception of Jewish onlookers as a hostile chorus, rejoicing in Christian misfortunes or divisions, is applied also to Constantinople. Palladius, in his *Dialogue on the Life of John Chrysostom* (10), records how Jews and pagans jeered at John's expulsion in 404;[52] while Nestorius, writing his autobiographical polemic, *The Book* (or *Bazaar*) *of Heracleides*, from his exile in Egypt, recalls that Jews, pagans, and heretics had been roused against him in 431.[53] But perhaps no passing allusion catches the tone and assumptions of the time better than Palladius' report in his *Dialogue* on John Chrysostom (20) of how John's supporters, after condemnation, were escorted from Constantinople round by land to exile in Egypt and were deliberately housed overnight by their military escorts in Samaritan or Jewish synagogues, especially after they had passed through Tarsus in Cilicia. Such synagogues could be assumed to be there, and being given lodging in them was intended as a deliberate humiliation.

Conclusion

The scattered evidence, of various types, at which we have looked is obviously insufficient to allow definite conclusions. But it is coherent and tends in the same direction. In essence what has been offered here is a return to the implications of older collections of Christian evidence relating to Jews, by Jean Juster, or by Marcel Simon, focusing on the Jews viewed as a hostile, or

51. See Alan Cameron, "The Authenticity of the Letters of St Nilus of Ancyra," *Gr. Rom. and Byz. St.* 17 (1976): 181. The letters are printed in *PG* LXXXIX, cols. 81–581.

52. See A.-M. Malingrey, ed., *Palladius, Dialogue sur la vie de Jean Chrysostome* I (*Sources Chrétiennes* 341, 1988).

53. Nestorius, *Book of Heracleides* II.1, English trans. G. R. Driver and L. Hodgson (1925), 322; French trans. F. Nau, *Nestorius, Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas* (1910), 240.

rival, element in the Christian period.[54] But this material is reinforced here by documentary and archaeological evidence, much of which had not been available to earlier scholars. What is deliberately omitted here is "Judaeo-Christians," or Ebionites, for whom we are entirely dependent on Christian reports.

The religious spectrum of the period around A.D. 400 was in any case complex enough. All that is asserted here is that the history of Judaism in late antiquity cannot be confined to Palestine, for we can see that there was a very significant Jewish life in the diaspora: predominantly Greek-speaking, but with strong hints that Hebrew and Aramaic might be studied and used here too; a "synagogal" Judaism certainly, but not one in regard to which we can either assert or deny the title "rabbinic" (the *sophodidaskalos* from Sardis, and Synesius' *nomodidaskalos* should give us pause for thought); a Judaism based on the Bible, from which anyone was free to escape by the simple step of converting to Christianity, as some certainly did; and a communal Judaism which was assertive, might attract "God-fearers" or full proselytes, could be argumentative, and might on occasion turn to abuse and violence. This chapter in the history of Judaism has yet to be written.

54. J. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain: leur condition juridique, économique et sociale*, esp. vol. I (1914), 43–76; M. Simon, *Verus Israel: étude sur les relations entre Chrétiens et Juifs dans l'Empire romain*[2] (1964), esp. chaps. iv–vi, viii (English trans., *Verus Israel* [1986]).

Author's Epilogue: Re-drawing the Map?

Introduction

An epilogue must by its nature involve looking back, and this one duly does so: first to the generous labours of Hannah Cotton and Guy Rogers; then, briefly, to the evolution of my own work since I began a doctoral thesis on Cassius Dio under Sir Ronald Syme in 1958; and finally, and at much great length, to the ancient world itself, and to the various shapes which the writing of its history might take on, when viewed from the perspective of the early twenty-first century.

The first thing is certainly to thank Hannah and Guy, however inadequately, for the huge burden of work which they have taken on, at a real cost to their own interests: negotiation with the publisher, selection of material, transformation of the style of presentation of older papers to fit the new context (much more laborious than might have been expected), the production of maps, proof correction, indexing, and so forth. No one could have better friends than these.

The end product of all these efforts, extending over a number of years, and taking up three volumes, has a coherence, or shows a progression, which by its nature is not a representation of the successive chronological stages of my own work. That began with the first three centuries of the Roman Empire, in the form of a book on Cassius Dio,[1] on the one hand, and of papers on the working of the Empire and on Augustus on the other. A piece of pure luck, in the form of a visit by Jean Bollack to Oxford in 1964, led to an invitation to write the volume of the Fischer Weltgeschichte on the Empire, a task which forcibly extended the range of my knowledge both in space and time.[2] In

1. *A Study of Cassius Dio* (1964; repr. 2000).

2. First published in the Fischer Weltgeschichte series as *Das römische Reich und seine Nachbarn* (1966).

many ways it could be said that I have lived ever since off the material thus acquired.

At the same time chance played a part in another way. In the sixties the history of the Jews under the Empire was one of the topics on which I lectured to undergraduates in Oxford. I believe it to be true, rather than a piece of fictional reconstruction, that it was reading Josephus which led me to notice that his narrative involved the despatch of a series of embassies to the Emperor, but did not seem to display the arrival in Judaea of spontaneous commands or general orders sent by the Emperor. This was thus, or so I firmly believe, the origin of *The Emperor in the Roman World*, which began as a planned monograph on embassies to the emperor, and only later expanded to cover other topics and other forms of communication.

The other direction in which an interest in Josephus led was of course to contact with Geza Vermes, and the revision of Schürer's *History of the Jewish People*,[3] the product of a series of step-by-step developments which are vividly recalled by Geza in his autobiography, appropriately entitled *Providential Accidents*.[4] To say that both authors, or editors, had to learn on the job is a polite way of confessing that we had at the beginning not the faintest idea of what the task would involve, or on what principles it could be carried out. When Martin Goodman joined us, however, he seemed to have a complete grasp of the problems from the beginning.

In the mean time I had moved to University College London in 1976, and found my new colleagues unanimous in the view that the new professor, in succeeding Arnaldo Momigliano, should inherit the lecture series covering Greek history from 404 to 31 B.C. A rapid immersion in wholly unfamiliar waters was required. Equally, Roman history, as defined in London, stretched forward to A.D. 410, and brought with it, among others, Eusebius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Augustine. But, in a way which was even more novel for me, it also extended back over the whole history of the Roman Republic to look at the regal period and the legendary origins of the city. Whatever sense I have of Republican Rome and its institutions, and of Italy in that period, is owed to my colleagues at UCL, John North and Tim Cornell, but also to Michael Crawford, and (and in a different sense) to a stay at the British School in Rome in 1983.

That intellectual debt remains, even if none of those named would agree with the conception of the power of the Populus Romanus which is explored in various articles collected in volume 1, *The Republic and the Augustan Revo-*

3. Schürer, Vermes, and Millar, *History*.

4. G. Vermes, *Providential Accidents: An Autobiography* (1998), chap. 15.

lution, and also in *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (1998) and in *The Roman Republic in Political Thought* (2002). What might look, following the structure of the three volumes of collected articles, like a starting point, was in fact, therefore, an expedition, or excursus, back from the Empire to the Republic; a fairly long excursus, it is true, covering some fifteen years, but an excursus all the same. The results are very controversial, but at least have provoked a lively debate, perceptively surveyed recently by Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp.[5] For all that, I remain a conspicuously "non-Roman" historian of Rome, whose intellectual roots lie in the imperial period and in the Greek East.

In consequence, it is the papers in volume 2, *Government, Society, and Culture in the Roman Empire*, which represent my real starting point, or base; and it is from work on the Empire, and especially its Greek half, that I have extended my interests, to a small degree, back into the Hellenistic period, and more particularly to Judaism and Christianity, to the eastern borders of the Empire, and now to the late Empire. It is these latter linked steps which are represented in the present volume, the third and last of the series.

The chief product so far of looking eastwards has been *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337*, of 1993, while the main result of attempts to gain some grasp of the late Empire (formidably difficult) is to be the book derived from the Sather Lectures of 2003, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)*, due for publication in 2006. I hope, and now believe, that circumstances will allow an attempt to complete this series with a book on the late Roman Near East of the fourth to sixth century.

Approaching the Ancient World

This being the trajectory, or the set of (more or less) linked trajectories, which my work has taken, and this being a moment to look back at the ancient world as it evolved from (let us say) the Trojan War on the one hand and Moses in Egypt on the other, as its legendary starting points, to the Islamic conquest of the seventh century, which I would adopt as the—necessarily arbitrary—terminal point, it will be worth reflecting for a moment both on the ancient world itself and on possible ways of writing about it. Since ancient historians tend to be of modest disposition, it is perhaps worth stressing that the period concerned covers two millennia, and is longer that that which stretches from the seventh century to the present.

5. See K.-J. Hölkeskamp, *Rekonstruktionen einer Republik: Die politische Kultur des antiken Rom und die Forschung der letzten Jahrzehnte* (Historische Zeitschrift, Beiheft 38, 2004).

Some such reflections are already offered in the prologue to volume 1, and in an earlier paper included there, "Taking the Measure of the Ancient World," and there is no need to repeat here the confession as to the many significant forms of history—ecological, environmental, biological, demographic, technological—which nothing in my work can claim to approach. I also remain an avid admirer of, but no rival to, the sort of sweeping social history, combining a sense of environment with the results of archaeology, represented in Barry Cunliffe's *Facing the Ocean*,[6] or in Nicholas Purcell and Peregrine Horden's *The Corrupting Sea*.[7] Prospectively, however, if the project for a history of the Near East in the late Roman period were to come off, it can be asserted that there is no better territory for the study of related small communities, each in their particular environments, than the still-visible ancient villages of several different regions of the Near East. Equally, the sixth-century Petra papyri, now in the course of publication, promise to reveal a developed agricultural economy and village society in an environment which at first glance seems to preclude any such possibility.[8]

If we can approach the ancient world in an incomparably closer and more intensive way now than was possible two centuries ago, this is due, first, to the organisation of knowledge achieved primarily in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, with the great *corpora* of inscriptions, coins, and papyri, and massive series of archaeological reports. But we should be aware also of just how far the advance of technology has completely transformed our capacity to confront the remains of antiquity: firstly, simply by the availability of photographic images of everything from pottery to papyri, inscriptions, coins, statues, architectural elements, wall paintings, relief sculptures, or mosaics. But secondly, and only now beginning to be exploited, the capacity to record, transmit, compare, and combine these images electronically. That brings its own problems, of information overload, of categorisation and storage, and above all of the long-term maintenance of data-bases, whether visual, textual, or both. The capacity to travel relatively easily, and thus literally to see any (or almost any) area of the ancient world, is also a fundamental transformation in itself. But perhaps even more fundamental is

6. B. W. Cunliffe, *Facing the Ocean: The Atlantic and Its Peoples, 8000 B.C.–A.D. 1500* (2001).

7. P. Horden and N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (2000); note esp. W. V. Harris, ed., *Rethinking the Mediterranean* (2005).

8. See J. Frösén, ed., *The Petra Papyri* I (2002), and the evocative survey of late Roman Petra by Z. T. Fiema, "Late-Antique Petra and Its Hinterland: Recent Research and New Interpretations," in J. H. Humphrey, ed., *The Roman and Byzantine Near East* 3 (JRA, supp. 49, 2002), 191. Note also Z. T. Fiema, "Roman Petra (A.D. 106–363): A Neglected Subject," *ZDPV* 119 (2003): 38.

the capacity to "see" indirectly, without moving from the spot, an infinity of images of documents, artefacts, art-works, buildings, and landscapes. The intensity of visualisation which Mikhail Rostovtzeff (1870–1951) achieved only by dedicated travel,[9] and by the inspection of sites and of the contents of innumerable local museums, can (potentially) now be achieved by anyone through a computer screen. None the less, at another level, nothing can substitute for the undefinable lessons of being there, of actually experiencing different environments.

The fact that we can now have a direct apprehension, whether physically and in person, or through images, print, or information technology, has enormous consequences which we have not in reality fully grasped. Hundreds of thousands of documents, whether inscribed on stone or bronze, or written on portable objects like ostraca or on perishable materials (papyri or parchments), millions of coins, displaying both images and writing, millions of artefacts of innumerable kinds, and thousands of (to varying degrees) standing buildings, or of excavated or unexcavated sites, can now be encountered directly, in one or other of the senses mentioned.

A New Approach to Ancient Languages?

The actual structure of our approach — or of our many different approaches — to the ancient world has, however, not been transformed by these developments to anything like the extent that it could, and in principle should. Take for instance dictionaries or lexicons of Latin and Greek. All of those which are currently available are based fundamentally on the relevant language as found in medieval manuscripts of literary texts, texts which then came to be printed in critical editions from the Renaissance onwards. But if the primary function of such a dictionary or lexicon were seen as being instead to serve as an aid to reading the millions of words of Greek or Latin which are now accessible directly, as preserved on papyri, inscriptions, coins, and other media, there would have to be a completely new start, with individual dictionary entries being based primarily on documents, secondarily on ancient (papyrus and parchment) texts of literary works, and only in the third place on the vocabulary and grammar found in texts printed from medieval manuscripts. To be carried out in a fully purist fashion, the entries would also

9. For Rostovtzeff and Franz Cumont, and the background which they brought to the excavation of Dura-Europos, see now the evocative and fascinating article by G. Bongard-Levin and Yu. Litvinenko, "Dura-Europos: From Cumont to Rostovtzeff," *Mediterraneo Antico* 7 (2004): 135.

have to reflect the grammar and spelling of archaic Latin or of early Greek documents, where relevant, or of papyri or rustic inscriptions, and even—to be fully purist—to represent variant letter forms.

Of course, in the real world the level both of collective effort, in deciding on the principles to be followed in a document-based dictionary or lexicon, and in reading and analysing the vocabulary, grammar, and script found in millions of surviving items of evidence, is completely inconceivable, as is the investment required for any such enterprise. So, in reality, we must reconcile ourselves to making do with guides to the classical languages which are not based on the vast evidence now available for Greek and Latin as they were actually written in the ancient world.

This unattainable prospect is even more tantalising when we consider that we have at our disposal a very significant range of, in one sense, literary texts for which the manuscript evidence does in fact date from the ancient world. For this purpose I suggest, as noted above, that the moment of the Islamic conquests in the Levant in the seventh century can serve as a reasonable terminal point for "antiquity." This definition would leave us with, as genuinely "ancient" ancient texts, not only large parts of Homer, as preserved on hundreds of papyri, but a mass of other Greek poetry, and some Latin, also known from papyrus, not to speak of scraps of the *Aeneid* from Masada, in one corner of the Empire, and from Vindolanda, in the diametrically opposite one;[10] but also (for example) the complete surviving text of the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia*, also from a papyrus, some fragments of Gaius' *Institutes*, the late Roman illustrated manuscripts of Vergil,[11] virtually the complete Greek Bible, from the fourth-century *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus* and the fifth-century *Codex Alexandrinus*;[12] and (just about) the *Di-*

10. For the quotation of *Aeneid* 9.473 from Vindolanda, see A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, eds., *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets* (*Tabulae Vindolandenses* II, 1994), 65, no. 118; and for that of *Aeneid* 4.9 from Masada, see H. M. Cotton and J. Geiger, *Masada* II: *The Latin and Greek Documents* (1989), 31, no. 721.

11. See D. H. Wright, *The Vatican Vergil: A Masterpiece of Late Antique Art* (1993); and *The Roman Vergil and the Origins of Medieval Book Design* (2001), with the challenging review article by Alan Cameron, "Vergil Illustrated between Pagans and Christians," *JRA* 17 (2004): 502.

12. It is relevant, at least in principle, that two of these great *Codices* are available in facsimile editions. For the *Codex Sinaiticus*, H. Lake and K. Lake, *Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus et Frederico-Augustanus Lipsiensis* (1911), for the New Testament, and (1922), for the Old Testament; also *The Codex Alexandrinus in Reduced Photographic Facsimile, Old Testament* I–III (1915–36), published by the British Museum. For a convenient account of both, see the pamphlet *The Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus* (1955), published by the British Mu-

gest, from the seventh-century Florentine manuscript which, if at the limits of the chronological definition suggested, has the distinction of having been written only about a century after the compilation of the work in question.

Quite apart from their intrinsic literary or intellectual significance, manuscripts or documents which themselves actually date from the Ancient World have an extra relevance, as providing direct evidence for the history of language, vocabulary, grammar, lay-out, and script. From them, in other words, we can see the texts as they were written or copied, not as corrected by medieval scribes, Renaissance printers, or modern scholars. Even if contemporaries would themselves have regarded some of these texts as inaccurate or ungrammatical, they still represent historical evidence of language and writing as practised by a particular person at a particular moment, and which therefore has an importance which cannot be matched, in this respect, by any medieval manuscript, or any printed text based on it.

So far, however, all the propositions put forward have related, in a very conventional way, only to Latin and Greek. That is not unreasonable, for however profoundly one wishes to (pretend to) start again, and to look at the ancient world as it was, and not as filtered for us by medieval manuscripts and Renaissance and modern printed texts, that "ancient world" which is the object of attention here is quite properly defined by the use of Greek and Latin. There were, however, other languages and/or scripts which were in use in the ancient world in question, from the Atlantic to northern India, and from the second millennium B.C. to the seventh century A.D.—for instance Celtic, Etruscan, the Italic dialects, Punic, Phoenician, Egyptian, various branches of Aramaic, including Syriac, and also Hebrew, Old and Middle Persian, Parthian, Akkadian, and Indian languages related to Sanskrit.[13] Many of these languages do not in general suffer the "disadvantage" of being seen through the lens of a vast store of medieval manuscripts which have been studied, printed, and re-produced in corrected editions for several centuries. In their case there is no option for us but to relate to them in the forms on which they were written in antiquity. The proposition that all of these languages and cultures should play a part in our overall view of the ancient world—not of course that they can all do so in the work of any one person—is clearly implied by mentioning them at all. Among these, the great challenge, hardly

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seum. If copies, on a reasonable scale, were more readily available, either would, like the Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (n. 37 below), offer students the possibility of reading canonical ancient texts directly, in facsimile.

13. See now the invaluable *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the World's Ancient Languages*, ed. R. D. Woodard (2004).

faced yet, must be Graeco-Roman Egypt, the inheritor of several millennia of civilisation, with its distinctive architecture, art forms, customs, governmental structure, and religious and social structure, and exhibiting in exceptionally complex form the interaction of its culture with Greek, and the survival and flourishing of its regional culture and historical memory, in far more distinctive forms than are characteristic of almost any other region, not to speak of the eventual evolution of its language, in the form of Coptic, as a language of Christian culture and liturgy. There are many reasons why Egypt is wholly exceptional among the regions which came within the domination of Graeco-Roman civilisation: the geological and ecological nature of Egypt, as a narrow strip of fertile land along a major river, bounded on either side by mountains or desert; the sheer weight of its past and its major pre-classical monuments, which still dominate the landscape today; its very distinctive art and architecture; and, above all, the linguistic demands imposed on any individual if he or she were to be fully conversant with the hieroglyphic Egyptian writing found on monuments (and still being written in the Roman imperial period), with the demotic Egyptian found on papyri and ostraca, and with Coptic, as well as with the mass of Greek (and some Latin) also found on papyri and ostraca. So it is perhaps not surprising that a large-scale, fully multi-dimensional, history of Egypt in the thousand years between Alexander and the Islamic conquests has yet to be written.[14] In the writer's eyes this remains one of the most challenging tasks facing students of the ancient world. It is all the more so, and all the more important, because any such approach would also have to confront one of the most important chapters in the earlier history of Christianity. But would it in fact be one chapter or two? Was "Egyptian" Christianity a coherent entity, or were Greek and Coptic Christianity separate and contrasting elements?[15] What part the history of Christianity should play in our approach to the ancient world is a topic to which we will return later.

So far, the emphasis has been, firstly, on the complete (potential) transformation in the means of access to the Greek and Latin heritage of the ancient world and, secondly, on the variety of languages to be found even in an "Ancient World" whose scope in time and place is defined by the use of Greek and Latin. In the case of most of these languages we come to the literature and

14. To say this implies no lack of appreciation of (for instance) the masterly survey by A. K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs, 332 B.C.–A.D. 642: From Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (1986), or of K. Michalowski, *The Art of Ancient Egypt* (1969).

15. See now S. J. Davis, *The Early Coptic Papacy: The Egyptian Church and Its Leadership in Late Antiquity* (2004).

documents now available without either the benefit or the handicap created by the existence of extensive narrative texts, such as the major Greek and Roman historians, originally composed within the Graeco-Roman period, but known to us (mainly) through medieval manuscripts. It would be absurd to claim that we either could, or should, attempt to escape from the interpretative framework offered by a Herodotus, a Thucydides, a Livy, or a Tacitus; but even in these cases there cannot fail to be a constant tension between the interpretations imposed by their narratives and the ever-growing mass of detailed information deriving directly from the ancient world (sometimes in the form of inscriptions which are sufficiently long and detailed to represent interpretative narratives in their own right).

Canonical Texts and Historical Reconstruction

But it is not only in narrative history that the long-established dominance of material known and used for centuries, because contained in medieval manuscripts, and long since published in printed editions, may pose truly profound problems in approaching the ancient world afresh now, in the light of the mass of material now available. The question of how to write history may be equally complex in those fields where there are long-established and long-known "canonical" texts which are not in essence historical in character, but which set out norms in terms of which the historical evolution which lies behind them can be interpreted. But should they be allowed to set these norms? We will take as examples three groups of material where we are confronted with the extra problem that they each also retain a relevance for us which is not solely historical, but reflects their function in the modern world: the three cases are Roman law, the Bible, and the standard texts of Talmudic Judaism.

Each of these bodies of material *can* legitimately be approached in a wholly non-historical way. We *can* of course read them as vast and significant bodies of text (which the overwhelming majority of readers, of the Bible at least, will only ever approach in one translation or another), and *can* ignore the questions of the context in which they were first generated, of the manuscripts in which they were copied, and of the nature of the printed editions of the last five centuries, which for most readers will inevitably represent what "the Digest," "the Bible," or "the Talmud" *is*. Taking the text as presented in each case in modern printed editions, we can ask (for instance) what moral, spiritual, or intellectual lessons it contains, what doctrines or principles it puts forward, or whether it is internally consistent, or embodies contradictions and ambiguities. And at least in the case of some of the works which

make up the Bible, we will want to ask what literary qualities they have. We can treat such a canonical work, in other words, as a self-contained body of text which we have profound motives for wishing to interpret.

Let us take first the example of Roman law. We *can* approach it as a timeless example of legal reasoning and of the expression of legal principles, as embodied above all in three texts: primarily the *Digest* and the *Institutes*, both compiled or written on the orders of Justinian in the sixth century, and secondly Gaius' *Institutes*, written in the second. All three, it is true, are, in the nature of their contents, not wholly timeless: for they refer to particular items of legislation, enacted at particular moments in the past, and also to decisions in particular cases, and (especially as regards the *Digest* and Gaius' *Institutes*) to imperial legal rulings embodied in replies to office-holders or private individuals. They are also distinct from each other in literary character and composition: Gaius writes as a private academic jurist of the mid-second century; the *Institutes* of Justinian is proclaimed by the Emperor as the work of three named jurists, who, however, in the text then speak in the Emperor's name, in the first person; and the *Digest* is a compilation, under a long series of separate headings, of relevant extracts from the private academic writings of the jurists of the classical period, namely the second and third centuries, thus several centuries earlier than Justinian's reign. None the less, it is a possible and legitimate way to read these texts, especially if the interest of the reader is in subsequent civil law codes, to analyse them in order to determine what "the" Roman law "was"—for instance, the law of property, or theft or inheritance or contract—and what underlying concepts and principles are present.

No such approach, however, is acceptable if our interest is not formal, but empirical and historical. For if, in enquiring about "Roman law," what we are concerned about is the law and legal system which operated in what historians, and indeed the man in the street, would normally call "Rome"—namely, the centuries from (say) Coriolanus to the age of Sulla or Cicero, Augustus, or Trajan—then all that already lay in the past, and much of it centuries in the past, before even the earliest surviving work summing up "Roman law," Gaius' *Institutes*, was written. Whether the principles set out by Gaius or those who succeeded him had actually been formulated centuries earlier, and hence had been determinative of what law was applied in real-life cases, is an empirical question. The answer will depend on what contemporary evidence we have from earlier periods, either as to specimens of relevant legal reasoning (of which there are some for instance in the speeches of Cicero)[16]

16. See now J. D. Harries, *Cicero and the Jurists* (2006).

or as to procedures adopted in attested cases. In many areas the closest we can get is by reading between the lines of narrative sources, or of forensic orations citing precedents, which themselves may have been written long after the episodes which they claim to report. The same is, of course, true of the constitutional and juridical structure within which, and by which, the law which then applied to Romans was enforced. The "early Roman Republic" which we can encounter is above all that which is set out for us in the pages of Livy, writing under Augustus. If we want to write the history of the Roman constitution and of Roman law, starting in the archaic period and going forward, we can do so (or attempt to do so) only by following the lines of retrospective reconstructions written much later in antiquity.

Any serious approach to a *historical* reconstruction of "Roman law"—of the law as it was actually applied to individuals—can only come when we reach the first period when there is a significant volume of contemporary literary (and some documentary) evidence, namely the first century B.C. But we will only begin to grasp the historical reality of jurisdictional practice, and the legal procedures and principles actually applied in deciding cases, when we reach the first century A.D., with papyri from Roman Egypt on the one hand and the Herculaneum tablets and related documents on the other.[17]

From then on documentary evidence is available, if of course extremely erratic in coverage; and we can also derive from the legal sources themselves concrete examples of datable cases in which Roman law was applied. This comes in two forms. Firstly, there is the quotation by Gaius, and by the jurists of whom extracts are assembled in the *Digest* (and other minor collections of juristic writings), of responses and rulings by emperors, all now laid out in chronological order in the priceless and rather neglected work of G. Gualandi.[18] Secondly, and even more neglected from the point of view of their legal content, there is the collection of imperial legal rulings, embodied in replies directed either to office-holders giving jurisdiction, or to interested private parties themselves, which is to be found in the third of the legal works compiled on the orders of Justinian, the *Codex Justinianus*. These begin, in chronological terms, with a ruling by Hadrian (A.D. 117–38) to the effect that

17. While there is of course much to be learnt still from the classic study of J. A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome* (1967), it is with the publication of reliable editions of a large number of tablets of the first century A.D. from Pompeii and Herculaneum that for the first time (in both senses) we can observe "Roman law" in operation in ordinary life. See above all G. Camodeca, *Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum* (1999), and the review article by G. Rowe, "Trimalchio's World," *SCI* 20 (2001): 225, and now E. Metzger, *Litigation in Roman Law* (2005), also using contemporary documents.

18. G. Gualandi, *Legislazione imperiale e giurisprudenza* I–II (1963).

the issue of whether witnesses to a will were slaves or free should not (in this instance) be raised, since at the relevant time it had been assumed universally that the persons concerned were free.[19] There are however relatively few rulings from the rest of the second century, and a dense sequence of such decisions only appears in the Severan period and after, for which the texts (that is, those addressed to private persons) have been arranged in chronological order, and analysed, in the ground-breaking work of Tony Honoré.[20]

To point to this body of evidence is not to deny that, both as quoted by jurists and as found in the *Codex Justinianus*, there may be problems in understanding these texts, primarily because none is complete as originally written, and all are in character extracts from rescripts which were originally longer. What is claimed here is simply that, as a genre, by their nature as imperial rulings on specific cases, they potentially provide evidence of the actual real-life application of "Roman law," in a way which otherwise can only be matched by papyri or other contemporary documents.

So, perhaps one example will serve to illustrate the significance of this collection for the actual application of Roman law. This case comes from the category of imperial rescript which was not studied by Honoré, namely the reply to a query from an official. In a ruling quoted in the *Codex*, Severus Alexander (A.D. 222–35) writes as follows to Iulianus, the proconsul of Narbonensis, evidently in reply to a consultation about the application of the Lex Iulia de adulteriis, passed under Augustus:

> If Gracchus, whom Numerius caught in the act of adultery at night and killed, was in such circumstances that under the Lex Iulia he could be killed with impunity, as this act was committed legitimately, then he [Numerius] deserves no punishment; and the same protection extends to his sons, who acted in obedience to their father. But if, with the authority of the law failing to apply, it was when rendered reckless by outrage that he killed the adulterer, although a homicide was [in fact] committed, because both the darkness and [his] justified outrage serve to mitigate his action, he may be sent into exile [as opposed to a more severe penalty].[21]

Whether or not the Augustan law had originally been motivated primarily by concern over the conduct of the upper classes in the Rome of his time, as is often supposed, it still applied in the early third century, and it was still

19. *CJ* 6.23.1.

20. T. Honoré, *Emperors and Lawyers*[2] (1994).

21. *CJ* 9, 9, 4. Iulianus is not otherwise known, *PIR*[2] I 79.

relevant in the provinces. We thus touch here briefly on a small piece of local history, and on a real-life example of the working of the imperial juridical system.

The mention at several earlier points of papyri as evidence for the same thing may serve to remind us that although the vast bulk of known ancient papyri come from Egypt, not all do. A substantial (and steadily growing) list of papyri and parchments, over 600 in all, in a variety of languages come from the Roman Near East.[22] Of these, a very significant sub-group derive from the provinces of Judaea and Arabia and illustrate the application of legal decision making to Jews in the period from the middle of the first century A.D. to the middle of the second—the period, in other words, of both the first Jewish Revolt (66–73/4) and the second (132–35). Between them, therefore, these documents illustrate the working of jurisdiction both under Roman governors and under the two successive Jewish independent regimes (if, so far, only a few from the first revolt). From this period there are about 150 documents. Since some of them incontrovertibly illustrate the workings of jurisdiction in a Roman province, they belong precisely with the other types of evidence mentioned.

There could, of course, be a conceptual study of the principles of Roman law which was still historical in character: that is to say that it would focus on the principles, doctrines, and definitions of Roman law as expressed in writings or documents of successive periods. Equally "Roman law" could be understood as the private law relating to those inhabitants of the Empire who were Roman citizens. Or the subject might be seen as an aspect of wider social history, embracing constitutional and administrative structures, the nature and procedures of courts, the available means of enforcement, the effects of social distinctions, and so forth; and it would also be a study of how the law and Roman jurisdiction operated in relation not just to Roman citizens but to anyone who lived under Roman rule.

The papyri and parchments from the Judaean desert would necessarily play a large part in any study of the latter sort. But they also must and do play a major part in another debate, which brings us to another area where we need to reconcile what we may call retrospective systematising representation on the one hand, with detailed contemporary evidence on the other.

22. See H. M. Cotton, W. E. H. Cockle, and F. G. B. Millar, "The Papyrology of the Roman Near East: A Survey," *JRS* 85 (1995): 214. In the light of new discoveries this list could now be significantly revised. For a more detailed look at relevant issues, see the author's review article, "Transformations of Judaism under Graeco-Roman Rule: Responses to Schwartz's *Imperialism and Jewish Society*," *JJS* 52 (2006): 139.

The main actors in the documents from the Judaean desert were all Jews; what is more, the documents illustrate in detail not only how their affairs were conducted under Roman rule, but also, as indicated above, how and under what system of law they were conducted under two successive independent Jewish regimes, in A.D. 66–73/4 (see above) and A.D. 132–35. As mentioned earlier, the range of documents, written in Greek, Hebrew, and Jewish Aramaic, along with some in Nabataean Aramaic from the last years of the Nabataean kingdom which was suppressed in 106, is considerable, and quite sufficient to throw a flood of light on the workings of Jewish society. These remarks do no more than recall the existence of this material without claiming to explore the complex issues which arise from it.

Contrasting with this documentary material, we have a much larger mass of Jewish texts deriving from medieval manuscripts, some of them (as it seems) composed or compiled in Roman Palestine: most notably the Mishnah of perhaps around A.D. 200, or the "Palestinian" or "Jerusalem" Talmud, whose date is profoundly uncertain but is perhaps as early as the fourth century. Along with these there is the much larger Babylonian Talmud, which has formed the basis for rabbinic learning ever since. But, while it is clear that this work was indeed originally compiled in Babylonia,[23] both the date of that process and the wider social context within which the Babylonian Jewish community lived are extremely obscure. It may well be that it did not reach its canonical form until after the Islamic conquests of the seventh century; at any rate the manuscripts on which modern printed editions are based are significantly later again and were written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

All this vast material is directed to the elucidation of the appropriate rules of Jewish life, and to the interpretation of biblical texts, and reflects the activity of generations of religious experts or scholars who are referred to by the honorific appellation "rabbi" (literally "my master" or "my lord"). To a very striking degree, the various possible approaches to this material can be set out as being quite closely comparable to those applicable to the corpus of Roman law. Firstly, it is perfectly legitimate in this case also to treat this as a body of significant text, taken as being embodied in whatever modern printed editions are available, and open to analysis as a source of doctrine or of religious rules. Secondly, it would be equally legitimate to work back from the available manuscripts to earlier forms of the transmission of the text, and then to an analysis of the original process of composition, if that

23. For the representation of the local, or regional, background which can be drawn from it, see A. Oppenheimer et al., *Babylonica Judaica in the Talmudic Period* (1983).

can be discerned at all. Thirdly, it would be feasible to take a semi-historical approach, and ask what sort of world or society is represented within the texts as transmitted. Fourthly, one might enquire what external testimony to the composition of the individual works there is, and examine how far we can reconstruct from non-rabbinic evidence, whether Christian or pagan observers, or contemporary documents or archaeological remains, evidence for the nature of the wider society within which these canonical works seem to have been composed. As regards late antique Babylonia, the answer seems to be that we hardly know anything which casts any external light on the context. As regards Palestine, it must seem astonishing to any outside observer that the main historical account of the birth of the Mishnah is provided by a letter addressed to the Jewish congregation of Kairouan in 987, and written by a Babylonian rabbi, Gaon Sherira. It is a serious question (and not merely a rhetorical one) to ask what genuine historical knowledge about Roman Palestine more than seven centuries earlier could possibly have been available to him.

Fifthly, insofar as we can, we could take each work in its context, while simultaneously using it as providing a view of the wider society, Jewish or non-Jewish, and deploying the external archaeological and documentary evidence as a tool for interpreting it. A model is already present, namely Martin Goodman's *State and Subject in Roman Galilee*,[24] applying this procedure to the Mishnah. But even if we assume that we can reliably date the Mishnah to around 200, it itself looks back to the activity and role of generations of rabbis, apparently going back to the period immediately after the first revolt, of A.D. 66–73/4. Even over this relatively short time-span, and within a quite well-known wider context, major problems arise. What external evidence have we that persons with the title "rabbi" did function in Palestinian Jewish society? In fact the earliest documentary evidence, quite extensive, comes from the Jewish necropolis of Beth-Shearim, whose own dating probably needs review, but may be taken (provisionally) as the third century. By contrast, in the entire corpus of documentary papyri and parchments of the period from the 60s to the 130s, referred to earlier, not a single rabbi appears.[25] No less striking is the observation which we owe to Hannah Cotton, namely the absence of any Jewish courts in any form from legal documents, whether written in Greek or in a Semitic language.[26]

24. M. Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee*[2] (2000).

25. For all these points, see now in more detail the review article referred to in n. 22.

26. H. M. Cotton and A. Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Texts from Naḥal Ḥever and Other Sites* (DJD XXVII, 1997), 154.

It does not follow that there were not at that time Jewish communities who conducted their lives in accordance with what they believed to be Jewish law, or that there was not a continuous maintenance of legal doctrine from the biblical period, through the drastically changing political structures within which Jews lived at successive periods, eventually to give birth to the rules proclaimed by the rabbis who appear in the Mishnah. But, exactly as with the study of "Roman law," in one or other of various linked but distinctive senses, *if* the purpose of our study is historical, then the primacy must go to asking what forms of authority and jurisdiction are attested in *contemporary* documents, and what sets of legal principles are found being applied there.

Nothing of what is said above implies that in any of the fields mentioned — Greek or Roman history, Roman law, "rabbinic" Judaism — we should jettison (or pretend to jettison) the vast store of information about the ancient world preserved in medieval manuscripts. But it *is* an assertion that, in every aspect, from the histories of the languages and scripts concerned to the nature and values of the different societies studied, the volume and variety of contemporary evidence which can now be encountered directly, along with the unparalleled extent to which the physical traces of the ancient world can be "seen," whether directly or through photographic or electronic images, means that the logical structure of our relation to that world has (at least potentially) been completely transformed.

The same is, or should be, true of the most significant of all examples of an ancient canonical text transmitted through medieval manuscripts. Once again, if we wish to take "the Bible" (or rather, in the vast majority of cases, one or other modern printed translation of it) as the object of religious or literary study, that is entirely legitimate. That is, in essence, to take the combined effect of medieval copying and of early modern and more recent printing of the Hebrew, and then of medieval and modern copying and printing of the Greek and Latin versions, and finally translations into modern languages, as constituting what the object of study "is" for us. There are then any number of possible approaches to it, from pious search for the word of God to comparative religion, study of the religious customs portrayed, anthropological analysis (as by Mary Douglas on Leviticus),[27] or concentration on language or literary forms.

But suppose that none of these were our immediate concern, but that our interest were, in one or other of several different senses, historical. If that interest related to what is conveniently called the "ancient world," let us say, in the Near Eastern context, to the thousand years between Alexander and

27. See M. Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (1999).

the Islamic conquests, then our first question would have to be: what *was* "the Bible" as it then was, and do we have any access to it? One indirect, but extremely important, channel of access has already been mentioned, the great fourth- and fifth-century codices of the Septuagint, the Greek translation. Their date means that they are not mere later reflections or copies of the "ancient" (Greek) Bible; on the contrary, they *are* what that Bible "was" in late antiquity, as used by Christians; and the same goes for the substantial number of papyrus fragments.

But what of the Hebrew Bible itself? It cannot be emphasised too strongly that our conception of what the Hebrew Bible "was" in the Graeco-Roman period has been completely transformed in the past half-century by the manuscript discoveries from the Judaean Desert, at Qumran above all. Large parts of the Bible can now be read in texts which are a thousand years or more earlier than the manuscripts on which modern printed versions are based, of which the most important belongs to the early eleventh century. If we cannot yet read all those different parts together in a single volume, with the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek reproduced as found in the texts from the Judaean Desert, we can at least now see all these texts together in an English version which is also an excellent guide to the sources from which what we identify as "the Bible" is derived.[28] But it still remains to take the much bigger conceptual step of thinking of the Judaean Desert texts as the primary evidence (as they are) and the medieval manuscripts as secondary.[29]

The new material thus takes us directly to the Bible which Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman period read, and to the concrete nature of the texts which they used, as regards form and material (parchment or papyrus rolls), lay-out, letter forms (with no pointing to indicate vowel sounds), spelling, and grammar. But, if the story of the Bible has entered a quite new phase, which should in principle involve a fundamental revision of all modern printed Hebrew Bibles, that still leaves largely untouched the fundamental question of how we should approach that earlier narrative history which is related in the various books of the Bible, and which stretches from the Creation to the Persian Empire of the fifth century. The book of Daniel indeed, though it may not

28. M. Abegg, P. Flint, and E. Ulrich, eds., *The Qumran Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (1999).

29. Even the excellent editors of *The Qumran Bible*, a truly priceless work of scholarship, occasionally fall into the trap of speaking of readings from the documents from Qumran as *deviations from* the standard, "Masoretic," text; for example p. 77, speaking of Leviticus: "Thirteen of the sixteen manuscripts exhibit some variation from the traditional Hebrew text." But that is the wrong framework. In so far as there are differences, it is the medieval text which represents a deviation from the Qumran texts, of 1,000 years earlier, or more.

appear to at first sight to do so, in fact brings the story, in the form of pseudo-prophecies, down to the second century B.C., in the Hellenistic period.[30] So too do two books which were to form part of the Greek Christian Bible, and hence of contemporary Catholic Bibles, but were not included in the eventual canon of the Hebrew Bible; I mean, of course, Ben Sira / Ecclesiasticus, written in Hebrew (of which some was found on Masada), apparently in the early second century B.C., and then translated two generations later into Greek;[31] and 1 Maccabees, preserved in Greek, but for which a Hebrew original is often supposed. In other words, the earliest actual texts from Qumran, from the third century B.C., overlap in time with the writing of the latest biblical, or semi-biblical, works, and are not enormously remote in time even from the latest events explicitly narrated in the canonical Bible, that is, those recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which took place in the fifth century. In a sense, therefore, if we wish to write "Old Testament history," our starting point and material are now quite promising, and all the more so if we choose to deploy the mass of non-biblical Near Eastern primary material, as in John Bright's classic *History of Israel*, to retell the whole story from Abraham onwards against the background of what we know from primary documents of local and regional history, from the neighbouring Phoenician cities or to Aramaean kingdoms to the Assyrian, Babylonian, or Persian empires.[32] Or, on the other hand, we might argue that all the earlier stages of the narrative represent a fabrication, concocted in the Babylonian Captivity, under the Persian Empire, or even in the Hellenistic period.[33]

Alternatively, we could leave open the question of whether the narrative offered by the Hebrew Bible is history or historical fiction and concentrate on the place of that story in the awareness of writers either from the Hellenistic period, such as Ben Sira / Ecclesiasticus, Daniel, or the authors of 1 and 2 Maccabees, or from the Roman period, such as (above all) Josephus in his *Jewish Antiquities*. Whatever choice we make, its basis, to repeat, has been fundamentally transformed by the availability of biblical manuscripts,

30. See the author's "Hellenistic History in a Near Eastern Perspective: The Book of Daniel," in P. Cartledge, P. Garnsey, and E. Gruen, eds., *Hellenistic Constructs: Essays in Culture, History and Historiography* (1997), 89 (= chapter 3 in the present volume).

31. For the (partial) Hebrew text of Ben Sira from Masada, see S. Talmon, *Masada* VI: *Hebrew Fragments from Masada* (1999), and *The Qumran Bible* (n. 28 above), 597–606.

32. J. Bright, *A History of Israel*[3] (1981).

33. For an example of the extreme sceptical view, see, e.g., Philip R. Davies, *In Search of "Ancient Israel"*[2] (1995), and for a vigorous recent response W. M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book* (2004).

including a few in Greek translation, actually written in the Hellenistic or early Roman period.

A Different "Ancient History"?

Lying behind the loosely connected observations which have been offered so far is a proposal, or suggestion, for a different way of approaching at least part of the history of the "ancient," meaning "Graeco-Roman," world. Furthermore, lying in its turn behind this proposal, to which we will come in a moment, is a recognition that in certain essentials Martin Bernal's project in *Black Athena* was justified in principle, even if the execution was marred by many conceptual errors, and by a misplaced concentration on a period of which too little is known, the mid-second millennium B.C.[34] The fact that the study of the Mediterranean region, as it was in the last two millennia B.C. and the first millennium A.D., has, since the early modern period, been a "Western" activity, combined with the primary educational role of Greek and Latin, has inevitably meant that earlier Greek history has generally been studied in relative isolation from its Near Eastern and Eastern Mediterranean context, and that later Greek history has been explored first in the context of Macedonian imperialism, and then in that of the Roman Empire.

This is simply a fact about the structure of school education and of higher scholarship in the West over the past few centuries (and of the effective absence of any comparable tradition of advanced historical education and scholarship in Islamic societies), and it is futile to denounce it for its inevitable limitations. If a much wider view would have been desirable in principle, as it clearly would, we would at least have to acknowledge that it is hard enough to create frameworks in which the young learn Latin or Greek (or have any awareness of past societies at all), without imagining a system in which it would be common for them also to study Hebrew, Syriac, Egyptian, or Akkadian.

All the same, to revert to themes explored in the "Taking the Measure of the Ancient World" in volume 1 (pp. 25–38), it is remarkable how firm an intellectual and educational barrier has been erected against the incorpora-

34. See M. Bernal, *Black Athena* I: *The Afroasiatic Roots of Western Civilisation* (1987), with the invaluable set of responses edited by M. Lefkowitz and G. M. Rogers, *Black Athena Revisited* (1996). The essential point, that Greek history and culture has been studied as the key element in "classics," or "Greek and Latin," but not as one element among others in the pattern of cultures in the eastern Mediterranean and Near East, is accepted by Walter Burkert in *Babylon, Memphis, Persepolis: Eastern Contexts of Greek Culture* (2004).

tion in the canon of Greek texts used for educational study, firstly, of the vast mass of primary material preserved on papyrus or in inscriptions, and, secondly, of Jewish and Christian texts. In a "Western" culture based on a (very partial) fusion of Judaeo-Christian and classical traditions, it is puzzling to reflect on how few students of Greek will ever have been offered the chance to read a private letter on papyrus, an honorific inscription put up by a Greek city—or the Septuagint, or the New Testament, or Josephus' *Antiquities*, or Eusebius.

But there could be a perfectly valid framework (and educational syllabus) of "ancient history" which took as its central focus the Levant or the eastern Mediterranean of (say) the first millennium B.C. and first millennium A.D., up to the Islamic conquests, and from that perspective would incorporate the emergence of Greek literature, the rise of the Greek city-state, and the spread of Greek colonisation on the one hand, and late Pharaonic Egypt on the other, as well as Phoenicia, the Aramean kingdoms, Israel and Judah, and the Neo-Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires. These empires would be essential to the story, and so—and in the same way—would Alexander's conquests, the Hellenistic kingdoms and the Roman Empire.

There is naturally no suggestion here that many elements of the sort of history which this framework implies have not already been written; indeed, from major works in French alone it would be possible to construct a massively impressive bibliography of high-level surveys for use in this programme.[35] Nor is it feasible that any one student, or even scholar, could master more than a modest proportion of the ancient languages required. In fact the central core of such a programme would be, in several different respects, a highly traditional one. Firstly, it would focus on "our" (Western) conceptual origins; secondly, it would require a focus on two ancient languages, as a minimum: not Latin and Greek, but Greek and Hebrew. Thirdly, at its centre would lie historical narratives composed in the ancient world: Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and their successors on the one hand; and the biblical narrative, from the Pentateuch to Chronicles, on the other. Since 2 Chronicles concludes with "the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia," it cannot (obviously enough) have reached its present form before the Achaemenid period. As an exercise in historiography, 1–2 Chronicles is therefore broadly contemporary with the major works of classical history writing. But there

35. Think for example of a syllabus which ran as follows: P. Briant, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre* (1996); C. Préaux, *Le monde hellénistique* I–II; M. Sartre, *D'Alexandre à Zénobie: l'histoire du Levant antique, IV^e siècle avant J.-C.—III^e siècle après J.-C.* (2001); C. Morrisson, ed., *Le monde byzantin* I: *l'empire romain d'Orient (330–641)* (2004).

is a huge contrast of genre. Greek historians, as John Marincola has shown so powerfully, sought deliberately to stress their personal identities and their personal authority for the truth of what they recorded.[36] But one and all of the narrative works found in the Hebrew Bible are anonymous: as texts, they present to the reader no "authors." The study of these two contrasted styles of history writing could not fail to be a key element in the projected programme.

A further stage would be (as above) to look at the Hebrew Bible as it was in the Hellenistic period, concretely laid before us in the texts from Qumran and the Judaean Desert. Some of these, like the great Isaiah scroll, written in the second half of the second century B.C., are so clear that advanced students could read them in facsimile.[37] At the same time, the few biblical manuscripts in Greek, from Qumran and elsewhere, could serve as a stimulus to approaching the Hellenistic Greek of the Septuagint. As for continuing with narrative history, there is Ben Sira / Ecclesiasticus, whose famous chapter 44 ("Now let us praise famous men . . .") and following, reflecting the key points of what was by now (around 200 B.C.) accepted as the national history, is among the sections which can (partly) be read in the original Hebrew in the text from Masada. But Jewish national history now shifts into Greek, with 2 and 1 Maccabees (in that order, as I believe), and later Josephus' *Jewish War* and *Antiquities*, between them matching the succession of histories in Greek by gentiles, from Polybius to Posidonius, Diodorus, Strabo, Nicolaus, Plutarch (writing in various genres), and Appian.

In terms of narrative histories in Greek, the thread would then be taken up primarily by Christian writers, of whom a remarkable proportion came from Syria or Palestine: for example Eusebius, Sozomenus, Theodoret, Procopius, Malalas, and Evagrius, whose *Ecclesiastical History* brings us to the 590s, well within the lifetime of Mahomet.

Absorbing and analysing ancient narrative histories, and the constructions of past and present offered by them, of course does not represent all that the modern historian of antiquity attempts to achieve. But it is none the less indispensable, for it is only from these works that we can gain both a factual grasp as to what the relevant sequences of events and historical periods had been, or was claimed to have been, and of what meaning was attached to them by ancient observers. Put in different terms, until we fully understand

36. J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (1997).

37. For the "Great Isaiah Scroll," found virtually complete, see Abegg et al. (n. 28 above), 267–68; and D. W. Parry and E. Qimron, *The Great Isaiah Scroll (IQIsa[a]): A New Edition* (1999), with photographs and facing transcription.

the story, or stories, which participants or later ancient narrators offer us, we cannot begin to ask whether we can offer something better, and if so, on what basis.

It is not claimed that the programme suggested here is somehow superior to, or must necessarily be adopted in place of, the established framework of "ancient world" studies, which takes Greek and Roman history (and Greek and Latin) as its basis. It is simply an alternative, which offers a different perspective. Abandoning the long-established "classical" perspective would of course bring huge concomitant losses—Rome and Italy would be seen only as a receptor of Greek culture on the one hand and as the source of an external dominating military power on the other, paralleling Persia and Parthia from the East—but with incomparably greater and more profound influence. And the whole story of the Romanisation of western and central Europe and the spread there of Latin and of Roman identity would emerge as (from this perspective) a distant and marginal process. The peoples who "faced the Ocean," to adopt the title of Barry Cunliffe's major work, would not find their history explored here.

Conclusion

So what is sketched here is not proposed as *the* ancient history for the future, but simply as *an* "ancient history" among others, and one with necessarily indistinct and indeterminate boundaries. Behind it lies a more fundamental methodological principle: that in all the areas, and in all the different languages involved, we have the chance no longer to operate within frameworks derived from texts preserved in medieval manuscripts, but can start (or seriously attempt to start) from material generated in the ancient world itself: written material (manuscripts, papyrus or parchment documents, inscriptions, graffiti); images, buildings, and architectural fragments; manufactured objects, household equipment, decorations, tools; quite large numbers of cities and villages which are still accessible, of which some hardly even require excavation; whole landscapes on which the impact of ancient society is still traceable. The pursuit of this objective, unattainable as it actually is, is the most important way in which we might "re-draw the map." The second proposal, namely an alternative avenue of approach to the ancient world, one identified not as "Latin and Greek," but as "Greek and Hebrew," is in fact less radical, and could indeed be seen as positively traditional, in allowing our approach to be shaped by the two determining elements of "Western" culture. But the parallelism is not just a matter of "us" or of "now," for it is present in the evidence from the ancient world itself. If it is modern criti-

cism which suggests that the composition of the narrative books of the Hebrew Bible was broadly contemporary with that of classical Greek literature from Homer to Xenophon, it is also the archaeological evidence of scraps of writing on pottery which shows that writing in the Greek language and the Greek alphabetic script appears in the eighth century B.C., just after writing in Hebrew in an alphabetic script did likewise. It is archaeological evidence also which shows how close the "palaeo-Hebrew" script then in use was to Phoenician script, and how close the two languages were to each other. It is this extensive new evidence, therefore, which gives so much more significance to what we knew all along from Herodotus, that the Greek alphabet derived from "Phoenician letters." The suggestion of an alternative "ancient history," in which not just the origins of Greek culture but the whole of Greek history up to the Islamic conquests would be seen in its wider Eastern Mediterranean or Near Eastern context, is in a sense no more than a return to cultural and religious origins. But it gains its point, as an intellectual exercise which might be conducted in the twenty-first century, from the total transformation of our capacity to confront the material evidence directly.

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